





THE BOOK  
OF  
THE PROPHET JEREMIAH  
AND THAT OF  
THE LAMENTATIONS.

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THE BOOK  
OF  
THE PROPHET JEREMIAH  
AND THAT OF  
THE LAMENTATIONS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW ;

WITH A

COMMENTARY,  
CRITICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND EXEGETICAL.

BY

E. HENDERSON, D.D.

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# INTRODUCTORY DISSERTATION.



## SECTION I.

### OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JEREMIAH.

WE possess more copious historical notices of Jeremiah than of any of the other Hebrew prophets. This is principally to be ascribed to the circumstances of the times in which he flourished, and the large share which he had in the transactions of his day. Incidental references are made to him, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 ; xxxvi. 12, 21 ; but it is principally from what we find in his own book, mixed up with the delivery of his predictions, that we learn the particulars of his history.

According to the statement made chap. i. 1, he was of sacerdotal origin ; but the opinion, that his father Hilkiah was the high priest of that name, who discovered the book of the law, can only have originated in the identity of name ; for if that exalted official had been his father, he could not have failed to be designated by the appellative *הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל*, *the high priest*, or at least *הַכֹּהֵן*, *the priest*, by way of eminence : whereas, he is merely spoken of as belonging to the priests who resided at Anathoth.\* There is no evidence to show that our prophet had ever officiated in the priestly office at the temple : it may rather be inferred, that his extreme youth incapacitated him from engaging in its functions.

\* The notion, that Jeremiah was the son of the high priest, was first broached by Clement of Alexandria, and besides having been maintained by Jerome, Kimchi, Abarbanel, Munster and Clarius, has been more recently advocated by Eichhorn, von Bohlen, and Umbreit ; but, on the other hand, it is decidedly rejected by Scholz, Hävernick, Knobel, and Hitzig.

The period at which Jeremiah was invested with the prophetic office, was singularly corrupt. Idolatry which, with all its abominations, had been re-established under Manasseh, and had only suffered a partial and temporary interruption on the repentance of that monarch, re-appeared in the reign of Amon his successor;—the groves and images not having been destroyed, the people speedily returned to their former practices. But on the accession of Josiah to the throne, that pious young prince undertook the complete abolition of all the objects and rites of idolatrous worship. It was in the year B. C. 629, the thirteenth of the reign of the new monarch, that Jeremiah was called to the discharge of the prophetic functions, and, combining his efforts with those of Hilkiah the high priest, the prophetess Huldah, and the prophet Zephaniah, very efficiently contributed to help forward the royal work of reformation. Almost immediately on his being called to office, he received a charge to go and proclaim a message in the metropolis; from which it may be concluded that he resided at Anathoth at the time the commission was given to him. It would appear from chap. xi. 6, that, besides prophesying at Jerusalem, he undertook an official tour through the land, for the purpose of announcing to the inhabitants of the cities of Judah the contents of the book of the law which had been found in the temple. On his return by way of Anathoth, his townsmen, offended at the boldness with which he reprov'd their wicked practices, formed a conspiracy to take away his life, which proved the first of a series of persecutions that embittered almost the whole of his remaining days.

His not unfavourable reference to Shallum or Jehoahaz, chap. xxii. 10—12, would seem to intimate that Jeremiah had experienced no impediment to his labours during the brief reign of that monarch; but no sooner did Jehoiakim come to the throne, than the priests and false prophets, backed by the populace, whose vices our prophet had unsparingly reprov'd, brought him before the civil authorities for punishment. Owing, however, to a conviction of his innocence in the minds of some of the princes, and especially to the influence of Ahikam, he was set at liberty. His imprisonment by Pashhur appears to have been of short duration, but it made a deep impression on the susceptible mind of the prophet.

Chap. xx.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim he received a command from the Lord, to commit to writing all the predictions which he had delivered orally from the commencement of his ministry. This having been done at his dictation by Baruch his amanuensis, the latter read the document to the assembled people on the day of the public fast; and after having been examined before the princes, and having informed them how he came to write it, he and Jeremiah were instructed to hide themselves, lest they should be exposed to the royal displeasure. Meanwhile, the king having become acquainted with the matter, the roll on which the prophecies were inscribed was read to him, when, on hearing only a few columns, he became so enraged that he cut it with a knife and threw it into the fire,—at the same time commanding the writers to be apprehended. By a special providence, however, they made their escape, which if they had not done, there cannot be a doubt, but that the enraged monarch would have caused them to be executed, as he had the prophet Urijah. Chap. xxxvi. 1—26; xxvi. 20—23.

We have no further account of our prophet during the remainder of the reign of Jehoiakim, except that, in consequence of a new command, he caused Baruch to re-write on another roll, all that the king had burned; and to this document many similar prophecies were added. Chap. xxxvi. 27—32.

It was the fate of Jeremiah after the death of Josiah, to live in the reigns of a succession of kings whose conduct and policy were directly the reverse of that prescribed by the theocracy; and, urged by Divine authority strenuously to oppose their wicked projects, he found himself almost incessantly in collision with them and their counsellors, and exposed to their displeasure. By Zedekiah, who appears to have shown him personal respect, and to have consulted him with reference to the national affairs, he would in all probability have been better treated, had it not been for the influence which the courtiers had over that monarch, in consequence of which our prophet was committed to prison, where he remained till Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. This monarch ordered him to be liberated, and gave him his option whether to go with him to Babylon or to remain in his native country. Preferring the latter, he strongly protested against the emigration to Egypt

of those of his countrymen who had been left in the land, and who were afraid of the vengeance of the king of Babylon on account of the murder of Gedaliah, whom that monarch had appointed governor. Determined to carry their purpose into effect, they compelled Jeremiah and Baruch to accompany them.

We now find the prophet delivering predictions at Tahpanhes, a strong boundary-city on the Tanitic or Pelusian branch of the Nile; but with as little success, as it respects any real reformation, as that which had attended his labours previous to the captivity. How long he lived in Egypt we know not, but according to tradition he died in that country, and was buried at Tahpanhes. After the exile the Jews attached the highest importance to his memory, and such was their veneration for him, that they cherished the belief he would rise again from the dead, and make his appearance as a forerunner of the Messiah. See Matt. xvi. 14.

What rendered the half century during which Jeremiah flourished, a period of peculiarly eventful and disastrous character, was the prevalence of internal disorders resulting from the obstinate refusal of the princes to listen to the admonitions of Jehovah, and the alienation of their confidence from him to their Egyptian ally. The Chaldeans, having succeeded to the rule in Asia, threatened Egypt with invasion; in consequence of which the Jews who were situated between the two powers were exposed alternately to the inroads of the one or the other of their hostile armies. The first calamity which befell them was the defeat and death of Josiah, when giving battle to Pharaoh Necho; and when they afterwards sided with the Egyptians against the Chaldeans, they became involved in all the miseries of a war with that power. Though solemnly warned by the prophet of the destructive consequences that would result from their alliance with Egypt, and repeatedly advised to submit to the Chaldean conqueror, they persisted in rejecting the Divine messages to that effect, and brought upon themselves the calamities attendant upon the capture of their city, and their subjugation by a barbarian foe.

How these circumstances affected the mind of the prophet is obvious from the whole strain of his predictions. He appears to have been naturally of a mild and timid disposition, easily susceptible of sorrow and melancholy, but intrepid and unintimidated

in the public discharge of the duties of his office, denouncing in unsparing language the wicked conduct of persons of all ranks, from the meanest of the subjects up to the monarch on his throne. This combination of characteristic features Hävernicks justly considers as furnishing a strong proof of the Divine origin of his mission;—the Spirit of prophecy acting powerfully upon his mind, controlling his natural temper, and qualifying him for his hazardous undertaking, without doing violence to his peculiar individuality.\*

The length of time during which he prophesied in Judea was exactly forty years and a half, as appears from the following estimate:—

	YEARS.	MONTHS.
Under Josiah . . . .	18	0
Under Jehoaiah . . . .	0	3
Under Jehoiakim . . . .	11	0
Under Jeconiah . . . .	0	3
Under Zedekiah . . . .	11	0
	<hr/> 40	<hr/> 6

## SECTION II.

### OF THE STYLE OF THE PROPHET.

THE peculiar circumstances of his times could not fail to impress a singularly marked plaintiveness of tone on most of his predictions. From the depths of sympathy with his suffering countrymen, and of poignant grief on account of the atrocious wickedness that brought upon them the calamities which they suffered, he pours out his feelings in the most affecting manner, and scarcely knows when to arrest his utterances, heaping phrase upon phrase, and sentence upon sentence, expanding his imagery over whatever has the slightest connexion with the subject, as those naturally do who give vent to powerful emotions of sorrow. His style is characterised by a degree of negligence beyond that of any of the other

\* Einleitung, ii. theil. 2 abtheil. p. 198.

prophets; but that this is to be ascribed, not to want of cultivation, but to the state of mind just referred to, is evident from the fact that there are portions of the book which little, if at all, fall short of the compositions of Isaiah. We meet with many attractive alternations and admixtures of prosaic and poetic phrasology. The principal peculiarity of his style was not unobserved by Jerome, who remarks respecting it:—"Aliis prophetis videtur esse rusticior, sed sensibus par est, quippe qui eodem Spiritu prophetaverit." But that his greater rusticity is, as that Father asserts, to be ascribed to his being a native of Anathoth, few will be disposed to admit.

Notwithstanding the general diffuseness and prolixity which mark the historical and strictly prosaic portions of his book, such parts as are more or less rhythmical in their composition frequently exhibit a conciseness and energy, and, especially those directed against foreign nations, an animation and vehemence, eloquence and sublimity, which claim for him a high place among the writers of his nation. That such instances of the more elevated style are not attributable, as Eichhorn maintains, to his quoting from other prophets, appears from the circumstance, that the same elevation is discovered in passages the originality of which has never been doubted.

The fact that Jeremiah quotes from the Hebrew Scriptures extant in his day is beyond dispute; but it is worthy of notice that he never does this without alteration, adapting the language to his own style, sometimes adding and sometimes abridging, but always rendering it apparent that, however borrowed the matter, his object in reproducing it was to give greater effect to his prophetic representations.

The sudden alternations observable throughout his prophecies are to be accounted for by the variety of lights in which it was necessary for him to present his subjects, and the different states of mind in which he was while giving utterance to them.

Besides a number of words peculiar to himself, there are certain terms and phrases which appear to have been, as it were, stereotyped in his thoughts, the repetition of which is frequently to be met with. He is also singular in his fondness of triplicity, sometimes repeating the same word or phrase three times, and some-



times employing three different words or phrases, but always for the sake of giving greater intensity to his utterances. His style exhibits several instances which indicate a later period in the history of the Hebrew language. Several Aramaisms also occur, which some, without sufficient grounds, have ascribed to his intercourse with the Chaldeans. More has been made of the forms  $\text{יָדָה}$ ,  $\text{יָדָה}$ , and the like, instead of  $\text{יָדָה}$ ,  $\text{יָדָה}$ , &c., than the case warrants; for the same forms are found, though more rarely, in the Books of Joshua and Kings.

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### SECTION III.

#### OF THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE PROPHECIES.

THE slightest glance at the economy of the book must convince the reader, that it could not have come from the prophet in the condition in which we now find it. Even supposing that he did not pay any particular attention to chronological arrangement, but that his object was simply to furnish a collection of his different prophecies, and some of the principal historical events both of a public character and relating to his own personal circumstances, yet we can scarcely conceive it possible, that there could originally have been such instances of the *ὑστερον πρότερον* as we now meet with in his composition.

According to the history of the Jewish monarchs, furnished by the Books of Kings and Chronicles, the following is the order of time in which the five last kings reigned: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeichoniah, and Zedekiah. Under all these monarchs Jeremiah flourished; but, as the second and fourth reigned only three months each, no date is taken from the period of their occupancy of the throne. The only reigns which are thus recognised are those of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. Instead, however, of the prophetic discourses being arranged in this order, we find, contrary to expectation, those which were delivered in the reign of Josiah, and which are contained collectively in chapters i.—xx., immediately followed by a portion belonging to the time of

Zedekiah, chap. xxi. Again, instead of continuing what relates to Jehoiakim, and his brothers Jehoahaz and Jeconiah, in chap. xxii. and xxiii., by inserting the section contained in xxv., which is specially referred to the fourth of Jehoiakim, we find in chap. xxiv. 8—10, a prediction belonging to the time of Zedekiah. We have likewise chaps. xxvii. xxviii. xxix. xxxiii. and xxxiv. referred to the reign of Zedekiah, whereas chaps. xxxv. and xxxvi. relate to transactions which occurred in that of Jehoiakim. There is also the introduction of a passage, chap. xlv., dated from the fourth of Jehoiakim, after the predictions relating to the Jews who had fled to Egypt subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem.

With these exceptions, however, there is a general consecutive-ness in the arrangement of the contents of the book. The main part, consisting of chaps. i—xlv., is occupied with home affairs,—that portion which takes a brief glance at the fate of foreign nations, chap. xxv. 12—28, being introduced merely in consequence of what had just been mentioned respecting their treatment of the Jews. The remaining part, chaps. xlvi.—li., is occupied with special predictions relative to the punishment of those foreign nations which had been hostile to the Jewish state, especially Babylon, the most formidable and destructive of all. Chap. lii. was written as an appendix by a later hand, to complete what had been narrated respecting the fate of the city, and of the Jewish exiles.

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## SECTION IV.

### OF THE VERSION OF THE LXX.

THERE cannot be a doubt, that the version of the LXX. at a very early period differed from the Masoretic Text, not only in considerable additions and omissions, but in the position and order of several of the prophecies. This fact is distinctly avowed by Origen and Jerome as existing in their day. The former affirms, that there is much in the Hebrew Job that is wanting in the LXX.; sometimes three or four, and sometimes as many as fourteen lines. “But why,” he proceeds, “should I accurately specify everything

that I have collected with much pains, to discover the discrepancy which exists between the Hebrew and Greek copies? Much of this description, and in the Book of Jeremiah also many transpositions of single prophecies, have come under my observation.”\*

To the same effect Jerome, speaking of the labour which he had in recovering the text from the confused and corrupt state into which, in his opinion, it had been reduced by copyists, says: “*Hieremiæ ordinem librariorum errore confusum, multaque quæ desunt ex hebræis fontibus digerere, ordinare, deducere, et complere (censui), ut novum ex veteri verumque pro corrupto atque falsato prophetam teneas.*”—*Præfat. ad Hieremiam.*

The different arrangement in the order of the chapters, as exhibited in the Hebrew Bible and the copies of the LXX., will be seen on comparing the following columns, which begin where the discrepancy first takes place:—

HEB. TEXT.	TEXT OF LXX.	HEB. TEXT.	TEXT OF LXX.
Chap.	Chap.	Chap.	Chap.
xxv. 15—38.	xxxii.	xl.	xlvi.
xxvi.	xxxiii.	xli.	xlvi.
xxvii. 1—18.	xxxiv.	xlii.	xlvi.
xxvii. 19—22.	Wanting.	xliii.	xlvi.
xxviii.	xxxv.	xliv.	li. 1—31.
xxix.	xxxvi.	xlvi.	li. 31—35.
xxx.	xxxvii.	xlvi.	xxvi.
xxxi.	xxxviii.	xlvi.	xxix. 1—7.
xxxii.	xxxix.	xlvi.	xxxi.
xxxiii. 1—14.	xl.	xlvi.	Wanting.
xxxiii. 14—25.	Wanting.	xlvi.	xxx. 1—5.
xxxiv.	xli.	xlvi.	xxx. 7—22.
xxxv.	xlii.	xlvi.	xxx. 11—16.
xxxvi.	xliii.	xlvi.	5—11.
xxxvii.	xliv.	xlvi.	xxx. 15—21.
xxxviii.	xlvi.	xlvi.	xxvii.
xxxix. 1—3; 15—18.	xlvi.	xlvi.	xxviii.
xxxix. 4—14.	Wanting.	xlvi.	

On comparing the above Table it will be seen, that not only is there a transposition of the chapters, especially as it respects the

\* *Epist. ad Africanum*: Πάλιν τε αὐτὴ πλείστα τε ὅσα διὰ μέσου ὄλου τοῦ Ἰωβ παρ' Ἑβραίοις μὲν κεῖται, παρ' ἡμῖν δὲ οὐχί· καὶ πολλάκις μὲν ἔπη τέσσαρα ἢ τρία ἔσθ' ὅτε δὲ καὶ δεκατέσσαρα—καὶ τί με δεῖ καταλέγειν ἢ μετὰ πολλοῦ καματοῦ ἀνελέγμεθα, ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ λανθάνειν ἡμᾶς τὴν διαφορὰν τὴν παρὰ Ἰουδαίους καὶ ἡμῖν ἀντιγράφων πολλὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα καὶ ἐν τῷ Ἱερεμίου κατενοήσαμεν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ πολλὴν μετέθεσιν καὶ ἐνναλλαγὴν τῆς λέξεως τῶν προφητευομένων εὗρομεν.

prophecies against the foreign nations—these having been removed by the LXX. from their position at the end of the book, and placed after chap. xxv. 13,—but that there is likewise a change in the order in which these prophecies are arranged. This the following Table will show :—

HEB. TEXT.	TEXT OF LXX.	HEB. TEXT.	TEXT OF LXX.
Egypt.	Elam.	Damascus.	Ammon.
Philistines.	Egypt.	Kedar.	Kedar.
Moab.	Babylon.	Elam.	Damascus.
Ammon.	Philistines.	Babylon.	Moab.
Edom.	Edom.		

To account for the discrepancies both in the arrangement of the different parts of the Hebrew Text, and those existing between this text and that of the LXX., numerous hypotheses have been formed. Of these the most celebrated is that of Eichhorn,\* who supposes that Jeremiah originally wrote his oracles on separate skins or rolls, the collection of which was circulated in Egypt, and from this the version of the LXX. was made ; and that he prepared another and later edition, which came into circulation in Babylon and Palestine, and formed the basis of the Masoretic Text. He assumes that these skins or sheets came by some accident to be displaced, and that this occasioned the disarrangement now found in the book. While this hypothesis accounts in a plausible manner for many variations from the Hebrew Text, it does not relieve the difficulty arising from the fact of the additions which are found in the LXX. Not satisfied with this hypothesis, one of a more artificial character was advanced by Bertholdt,† who maintains that the book originated in three compilations, with the addition of two loose sheets. These he exhibits quite in diplomatic style, under the titles of Codices A. B. C. D. E. F., with other minor divisions. The principle of reconciliation, adopted by Movers, one of the more recent German critics,‡ is to this effect, that there was originally a collection in six books—the collector taking as his basis the second copy of Baruch, and adding other matter to it without any exact regard to the order of insertion. Certain

\* Einleitung in das A. T. iv<sup>ter</sup>. Band. § 539—§ 542.

† Historisch-Kritische Einleitung, p. 1457, and following.

‡ De utriusque Recensionis Vaticiniorum Jeremiæ, Hamburgi, 1837, 4to.

portions he arbitrarily ascribes to an anonymous collector, who has for some time passed among the Germans under the title of Pseudo-Isaiah. He veers between the two texts, now charging the Hebrew, and now the LXX., with interpolations, omissions and additions, yet preferring on the whole the latter before the former. Though Hitzig and De Wette give in to his general principle, yet they object strongly to many of his positions, and consider that he has in many instances done injustice to the Hebrew Text. Those who would go thoroughly into the subject, will do well to peruse this work of Movers, together with that on Jeremiah by the Spohns, father and son.\*

Without unduly disparaging the Text of the LXX. it may safely be affirmed, that it requires only a slight comparison of the Hebrew and Greek Texts with each other to perceive, that the translators by no means laid it down as a principle, to which it was incumbent upon them to adhere throughout, to give an exact and rigid representation of the original. Not to insist upon other passages, it seems impossible otherwise to account for their insertion of the prophecies against the foreign nations after chap. xxv. 13. Finding in ver. 13, a reference to these prophecies as inserted in the Book of Jeremiah, they took the liberty of transposing them from the place which they held at the end of that book, and placed them immediately after the reference. They, at the same time, took the further liberty of placing the prophecy against Elam first, and of arranging the order of the others differently. The former was done, apparently, as De Wette supposes, because it possessed the greater interest at the time the version was made. It is manifest, that at the time chap. xxv. 13 was penned, the chapters in question must have been written. But if the predictions against foreign nations had followed immediately after this thirteenth verse, as they now do in the version of the LXX., there could have been no propriety in making the observation. The very wording of the reference shows that they existed in some other part of the book, and not in the immediate context. To whatever respect the Text of the LXX. may be entitled from the use that has been made of it both in the Jewish and Christian Church, and especially from the

\* *Jeremias Vates e versione Judæorum Alexandrinorum.* Vol. i. Lipsiæ, 1794. Vol. ii. Lipsiæ, 1824.

circumstance, that our Lord and his Apostles make their principal citations from the Old Testament in the words of it, it never can, as a version, be allowed to over-ride the Hebrew original. To inspiration, in the strict acceptation of that term, it cannot lay claim, though, practically and popularly considered, its contents must be regarded as possessing Divine authority.

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In the Translation I have adopted the division of chapters found in the Hebrew Bible, conceiving it to be more convenient for the sake of reference than the new arrangement preferred by Blayney from chap. xx. to chap. xlv. The following is the order adopted by that author :—

Chap.	Chap.	Chap.	Chap.
xx.	xl.	xxi.	xxxix. 1—14.
xxii.	xxiv.	xxxiv.	xl.
xxiii.	xxix.	xxxvii.	xli.
xxv.	xxx.	xxxii.	xlii.
xxvi.	xxxi.	xxxiii.	xliii.
xxxv.	xxvii.	xxxviii.	xliv.
xxxvi.	xxviii.	xxxix. 15—18.	xlvi. &c.

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# J E R E M I A H.

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## CHAPTER I.

The book commences with a proem or general title, 1—3; then follows the call of Jeremiah to the prophetic office, 4—10. The prophet next gives an account of two visions which he had—the one of an almond-tree, indicative of the early approach of the Divine judgments, and the other of a boiling pot, symbolical of their severity, and of the quarter whence they were to come, 11—16. The rest of the chapter is occupied with assurances of Divine aid and protection in the discharge of his difficult and dangerous undertaking.

- 1 THE words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who
- 2 were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of Jehovah was communicated in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of
- 3 his reign. It was also communicated in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, till the end of the

1—3. Whether these verses were written by Jeremiah himself, or whether they are from the pen of Baruch, cannot be determined, though Michaelis is of opinion that they may have been prefixed by the prophet when he collected his prophecies, and gave them to his countrymen to take with them into Babylon. אנאִתּוֹת, the LXX. render *ὅς* in the singular, and refer it either to Jeremiah, or to Hilkiah. The Vulg., more properly *qui fuerunt*, taking the priests to be the subject of reference. There is no ground for supposing that there ever existed in the Hebrew text any term corresponding to *κατάκει*, which is found in the former of these versions. For particulars relative to the personal history of the prophet, and that of the kings whose names are here specified, see Preface. אנאִתּוֹת, *Anathoth*, a town in the tribe of Benjamin, which Josephus states

to be twenty stadia distant from Jerusalem, and which Jerome describes as three Roman miles north of that city. Dr. Robinson considers the present *Anātu* to occupy the site of this ancient town, portions of the wall of which, as also the foundations of some of the houses, still remain. Tradition is in favour of another site on the road to Ramleh, at the same distance from the capital; but the direction of the towns specified, Is. x. 28—32, seems to determine the point in favour of Dr. Robinson's opinion. Anathoth was one of the four cities of the tribe of Benjamin, which were allotted to the Kohathites, who formed one of the three great divisions of the Levitical tribe. Josh. xxi. 18. It was to this his native city, that Solomon ordered Abiathar to repair, when he deposed him from the high priesthood, 1 Kings ii. 26: a sentence which might be regarded as

eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, till the exiling of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

4 The word of Jehovah was communicated to me, saying :

5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee ;

And before thou camest forth from the womb I separated thee,

6 I ordained thee a prophet to the nations. But I said : Ah Lord Jehovah ! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child.

casting a stigma upon the whole sacerdotal family resident there, and to which there may be an indirect reference in the words : " the priests who were in Anathoth." See 1 Kings ii. 26, 27. That neither Jehoahaz nor Jehoaquin is included in the number of kings here mentioned is doubtless owing to the circumstance, that they each occupied the throne only three months ; but that these three verses were intended to be a general title to the whole book, appears evident, not only from the analogy of other prophetic books, but from the specification of both the first and last of the kings in whose reigns the prophecies were communicated.

4. הָיָה בְּיָמַי must be considered as purely initiative. Instead of הָיָה, *to me*, one of De Rossi's MSS. has originally read הָיָה, *to him*, to which πρὸς αὐτόν, the reading of the Codex Vaticanus, lends its authority ; but that of the Codex Alexandrinus, and the Aldine and Complutensian editions, and the Hexaplar Syriac and Arabic versions, gives its support to the Hebrew text. There is every reason to believe that the inscription of the book was made by Jeremiah himself.

5. הָיָה צֶרֶף ought to have been pointed צֶרֶף, which obviates the necessity of removing the י as recommended by the Chethib. צֶרֶף and צֶרֶף both signify *to fashion, or form*. Comp. the Arab. صور

in the singularly parallel language of the Korân, Sur. iii. 4,

هو الذي يصوركم في الارحام

*He that formed you in the womb.*

הָיָה צֶרֶף and הָיָה צֶרֶף, though future in form, are preterite in signification, following צֶרֶף. Jehovah here asserts his eternal choice of the prophet, and his predestination of him to the prophetic office. יָדָע, *to know*, is to be taken in the

sense of having a regard for, approving as an object of choice. Compare the use of γινώσκω in προγινώσκω, in the same acceptance, Rom. viii. 29. שָׁרָא does not primarily signify to be pure or holy, but to be separated from a common to some special purpose. The idea of purity, whether physical, ceremonial, or moral, was originated by that of such separation. When, therefore, Jehovah declares, that he had sanctified the prophet before his birth, the meaning is not, that he had cleansed him from the pollution of original sin, or that he had regenerated him by his Spirit, as some have imagined, but that he had separated him in his eternal counsel to the work in which he was to be engaged. Fuit ergo non effectu sanctificatus Jeremias in utero, sed in Dei predestinatione, et arcano consilio : quia scilicet tunc Deus ipsum elegit Prophetam.—*Calvin*. With a view to a similar predestination, the apostle Paul uses language very nearly parallel : Ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου, Gal. i. 15 : where separation is to be referred to the Divine destination of the apostle, and not to his actual birth. We are here forcibly reminded of the facts, that "known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world," and that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Acts xv. 18 ; Eph. i. 11. The instruments whom he employs for effecting his purposes are not brought into existence merely as links in the chain of causes and effects, but with a special view to the work which each has to perform. The prophetic office of Jeremiah was to include within the range of its bearing not the Hebrews only, but also the nations that were hostile to them. See chap. xxv. 12—38 ; xxvii. xlv. —li.

6—8. Jeremiah may at this time have been about twenty years of age ; and he



- 7 Then Jehovah said to me : Say not, I am a child ;  
 For to all to whom I shall send thee thou shalt go,  
 And all that I shall charge thee thou shalt speak.
- 8 Be not afraid of their faces ;  
 For I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah.
- 9 Then Jehovah stretched out his hand and touched my mouth ;  
 and Jehovah said to me : Behold, I have put my words into  
 thy mouth.
- 10 See, I have this day appointed thee over the nations,  
 And over the kingdoms,  
 To pluck up, and to break down,  
 And to destroy, and to pull down,  
 To build and to plant.
- 11 Moreover the word of Jehovah was communicated to me,  
 saying : What seest thou, Jeremiah ? And I said : I see a  
 12 shoot of an almond-tree. Then Jehovah said to me : Thou

had never occupied any public station, or performed any public duty. He had had no opportunity of putting his talent as a public speaker to the test, and considered himself totally disqualified by his youth and inexperience for embarking in so unexpected and formidable an enterprise as that here assigned him. The Divine commission expressly given to him, and the explicit assurance which he received of the presence and protection of Jehovah, were calculated at once to remove his fears, and arm him with resolution for his work. *ל*, ver. 7, has the signification of *to*, as it has both in more ancient and in later Hebrew.

9. The prophet having alleged his incapacity as an eloquent speaker, he is apprised by an appropriate symbolical act, that every thing of the kind should be removed, and that God would vouchsafe to him all needful assistance in delivering his messages. The touching of the lips of Isaiah with a live coal, chap. vi. 7, and the giving of a book to Ezekiel to eat, chap. ii. 8, 9, 10, were similarly symbolical of prophetic qualification, and implied the gift of inspiration. Comp. also Dan. x. 16. In all these instances the actions occurred in supernatural vision.

10. *אָפֶּקֶד* properly signifies to appoint to the oversight of anything, implying

the discharge of the duties of such oversight : hence the verb is followed by the preposition *עַל*, *over*. The prophet was to have his eye upon the conduct of the nations, and to utter predictions of prosperity or adversity according as it was good or bad. His commission is here represented as consisting in his doing that which he was to declare should be done. This mode of speech is adopted in order more strikingly to express the certainty of the events. The metaphors, which are mixed, are borrowed from architecture and botany ; the nations, with their governments, being set forth now as buildings, and now as trees. Similar language is employed chap. xviii. 7 ; xxxi. 28. As the predictions of Jeremiah were to be primarily and chiefly comminatory, the destruction of the nations is placed first in order, and is expressed by a greater variety of terms. *בָּנֵי* and *נִבְנֵי* here mean *to rebuild* and *to plant again*, being expressive of the restoration of nations, on their repentance and reformation. The Targum improperly restricts what is here said to the nation of the Jews. *Jueundum paranomeon est Hebræis in שָׁנָה et לְבָנָה*.—*Zwingli*.

11, 12. The form of the language here and in verse 13 is similar to that found in Amos vii. 8 ; viii. 2. *אָפֶּקֶד*, *the*

hast rightly seen : for I will be early awake with respect to my word, to perform it.

- 13 And the word of Jehovah was communicated to me a second time, saying : What seest thou ? And I said, I see a pot  
 14 boiling, and its face is from the north. And Jehovah said to me : From the north shall the calamity be disclosed against all the inhabitants of the land.  
 15 For, behold ! I will call for all the families of the kingdoms of the north,  
 Saith Jehovah ;  
 And they shall come,

*almond-tree*, from *אֲמֹנִי*, *to be sleepless, awake, vigilant*, and so called because it wakes earlier from the sleep of winter than other trees, flowering in January, and producing its fruit in March. Thus Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* lvi. cap. 25 : *Floret prima amygdala mense Januario, Martio vero poma maturat.* It was an appropriate symbol by which to represent the early and sedulous execution of a purpose. The *אֲמֹנִי*, *staff*, was a *shoot* or *branch* which had been broken off the almond-tree, the blossoms of which were still fresh upon it. The explanation is contained in verse 12, in which the Lord announces his determination to execute with all promptitude his threatened judgments against the Jews.

13. Another symbol of similar import, indicating that the judgments were ready to burst forth, and pointing out the quarter from which they were to come. A boiling pot is a common image with the Orientals by which to express a severe and destructive war. See Rosenmüller *in loc.* ; and comp. Ezek. xxiv. 3—14. *אֲמֹנִי*, *blown*, properly expresses the result of the action by which the full blaze of the fire under the pot was produced, but the boiling of the pot is understood by implication. The passive participle has not unfrequently an active signification, especially in intransitive verbs which cannot take a passive meaning. Winer and De Wette, misled by a wrong construction of the paragoge *אֲמֹנִי* in *אֲמֹנִי*, render *אֲמֹנִי*, *towards*, altogether contrary to the force of the preposition. The *אֲמֹנִי* expresses in this case, as fre-

quently, not motion to a place, but rest in it. Comp. *אֲמֹנִי*, *מְלָכֹת*, "the kingdoms of the north," ver. 15 ; and with the prepositive *אֲמֹנִי*, *מִבָּבֶל*, "from Babylon," chap. xxvii. 16. The pot lying somewhat on the one side towards the south, indicated that its contents would proceed in that direction. By its location in the north, the abode of the Babylonians is pointed out, whence they were to come, and invade the land of the Hebrews. Though more to the east than to the north of Judea, the Hebrews always represent the Babylonians as living in, or coming from, the north, partly because they usually appropriated the term East to Arabia Deserta, stretching from Palestine to the Euphrates, and partly because that people, not being able to cross the desert, had to take a northern route when they came against the Hebrews, and always entered their country by the northern frontier.

14—16. An explanation of the symbol, containing a direct threatening of the invasion of Judah by the Babylonians. That it is to them reference is made, and not to the Scythian invasion, as Eichhorn conjectured, all are now agreed. The LXX. have not translated *אֲמֹנִי*, *families*, supposing it to be included in the following word, *מְלָכֹת*, *kingdoms* ; but it is used with special propriety, not only as tending to aggravate the calamity, but as expressive of the numerous tribes or smaller nations of which the kingdoms forming the Babylonian empire were composed. The two words are in

- And shall set each his throne  
 At the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem,  
 And against all her walls round about,  
 And against all the cities of Judah.
- 16 And I will pronounce my judgments against them,  
 On account of all their wickedness,  
 Because they have forsaken me,  
 And have burnt incense to other gods,  
 And worshipped the works of their own hands.
- 17 Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins,  
 And stand and speak to them all that I shall charge thee :  
 Be not dismayed at their faces,  
 Lest I confound thee before them.
- 18 For I, behold, I make thee this day a fortified city, and a pillar  
 of iron,

construction, and are not to be regarded as an asyndeton. By the erection of their thrones, or seats, at the gates of Jerusalem, and the other cities of Judæa round whose walls their armies would be encamped, the administration of justice by the conquerors is predicted. Quod Hebraeorum tribunalia pro portis essent manifestum est.—*Zuringle*. Such administration would be according to their pagan notions of right and wrong, and not in accordance with the law of God delivered by Moses.— $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$  properly means *to pronounce a judgment* or judicial sentence upon any one. See chap. xxxix. 5; lii. 9. Jehovah threatened the Jews with punishment on account of their rebellious conduct: he now declares he would carry his threatenings into effect by means of their enemies, who would sit in judgment and inflict upon them the calamities which they had merited. The sentences delivered by the foreign princes would be in effect the judgments of God. He would employ them as his instruments in carrying them into execution.  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ , which is properly the accusative, is used here and elsewhere in Jeremiah, instead of the regular prepositive form,  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ . Eighty-eight MSS., however, and several early editions, read  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$  without the Vau, which would leave it optional to point the word either  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$  or  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ .—Upwards

of a hundred MSS. read, or have read,  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ , *work*, instead of  $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ , *works*, and the same reading is found in some of the oldest printed editions, as it also is in both the Syr. versions, and in the Vulg. Both forms occur elsewhere in reference to idols. The LXX. have  $\text{τοῖς ἔργοις}$ .

17. The phrase "to gird up the loins" is employed to denote resolute preparation for the performance of any work. The metaphor is taken from the custom of the Orientals, who wear long robes, to bind them up with a girdle when about to undertake any laborious employment, or to set out on a journey, that they may not be entangled or incommoded by them. Comp. 2 Kings iv. 29; Job xxxviii. 3; Luke xii. 35; Eph. vi. 14. — $\text{אָפּהָרְבִּיבִי}$ , which is here used, first in Niphal and then in Hiphil, so as to form a paronomasia, properly signifies *to break, break down*, and, applied to the mind, to be afraid, dismayed, confounded. If the prophet did not exercise proper confidence in God, but gave way to the fear of man, the Divine support and protection should be withdrawn from him, and his enemies should be permitted to triumph over him.

18, 19. Reverting to the charge which he had given to the prophet in ver. 17, Jehovah now encourages him by assurances of invincible strength—the result

And a wall of brass against all the land ;  
 Against the kings of Judah, and against her princes,  
 Against her priests, and against the people of the land.

- 19 They may fight against thee,  
 But they shall not prevail against thee ;  
 For I am with thee, saith Jehovah,  
 To deliver thee.

of the Divine presence which should be vouchsafed to him. The metaphors employed in ver. 18 are very forcible, and convey the idea of impregnability. As no hostile weapons could affect such objects as those here specified, equally futile should every attack prove that might be directed against Jeremiah. Nor did the promise fail. We find him down to the latest accounts which we have of him in Egypt, notwithstanding all his persecutions, boldly testifying against the wickedness of his people. Instead of the plural *חומות*, walls, the singular *חמה*, wall, is found in twelve of De Rossi's MSS.; it has been originally in seven more, and is now in two by

correction. It is likewise in five ancient editions, and occurs in the defective form without the Vau in a great number of MSS. and editions. The LXX., Targ., Syr. and Vulg. all read in the singular. This form further commends itself as genuine on the ground of its being the less usual, but at the same time the more appropriate in application to a singular subject. I have accordingly adopted it in the translation.—*עַם הָאָרֶץ*, I have rendered verbally *the people of the land*, but the phrase has in this place nearly the force of "the common people," understanding thereby the mass of the population not included in the three former designations.

## CHAPTER II.

The prophet is charged to commence his ministry by reminding the Jews of the metropolis, as representing the nation, of the consecration and devotedness with which it had served Jehovah in the early period of its history, and the protection which in consequence they enjoyed, 1—3; and a forcible appeal is made whether any reason for dissatisfaction with his service had been found in him, and whether, on the contrary, he had not loaded them with benefits, 4—7; their ungrateful returns are then described, and their punishment denounced, 8, 9; their conduct was unexampled among the heathen, and was calculated to fill the universe with absolute consternation, 10—13; the calamities that should be inflicted upon them by the Babylonians and Egyptians are next detailed, 14—19; and thence to the end of the chapter we have a lengthened description of the incurably idolatrous disposition of the Jews, couched in highly figurative language, and intermingled with touching expostulations.

### 1 THE word of Jehovah was further communicated to me,

1. While the commission contained in the preceding chapter was general, and had a bearing on the whole of the prophet's future life, that here given was special, and the execution of it formed the first step of his prophetic

2 saying: Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying:

career. The year in which he delivered the message is not here specified; but there can be little doubt from what is stated, chap. i. 2, that it was the thirteenth year of Josiah, whom he must greatly have supported in the attempted reformation which that pious young monarch had commenced the previous year, and which he carried more fully out in the eighteenth year of his reign.

2. *לֵךְ* may either be considered as the infinitive absolute, employed instead of the imperative, for the purpose of rendering the command more emphatic; or it may be regarded as an abbreviated form of the infinitive followed by the finite verb, *לֵךְ* *לֵךְ*. Comp. for such usage, *לֵךְ*, Exod. xx. 8; *לֵךְ*, Deut. v. 12; and for the full form see *לֵךְ* *לֵךְ*, Deut. vii. 18; *לֵךְ* *לֵךְ*, Deut. vi. 17.—*Jerusalem*, as frequently, is used by metonymy for the inhabitants of the metropolis, to whom as the most guilty portion of the nation, and the source whence idolatry spread throughout the land, the prophet is charged to deliver his message. Interpreters are greatly divided in regard to the construction of the meaning of this verse. According to the force of the words, it may either describe the conduct of Jehovah towards the Jewish people, in conferring distinguished favours upon them at the commencement of their national history, or it may set forth the zeal and piety which they had evinced at that early period, and which so strikingly contrasted with their idolatrous practices in the time of the prophet. The former view is that adopted by Münster, Clarius, Vatablus, Strigelius, Grotius, Dalhe, Blayney, Rosenmüller, Maurer, and Scholz: the latter, which is exhibited in the Targum, and is approved by Kimchi, Michaelis, Dahler, Hitzig, Umbreit, and Ewald, is that, however, which better agrees with the context; for, after adducing the early attachment of the people of Israel to Jehovah as the only God, and their separation from all other nations to his service, in consequence of which they enjoyed his protection, God asks in the 4th verse, why it was that their

ancestors had abandoned him and his service? Now this question would have no point except on the supposition of previous allegiance. Avowals and proofs of such allegiance are frequently to be met with in their earliest history. At Sinai they declared: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," Exod. xix. 8; Deut. v. 27,—a declaration which they subsequently repeated, Exod. xxiv. 3. Witness also the willingness with which they consecrated their offerings as materials for the tabernacle, &c. Exod. xxxv. 20—29, which was so great that it was found necessary to restrain them from bringing more, Exod. xxxvi. 6, 7. To which add the solemn protestation which they made to Joshua, chap. xxiv. 16—22. It is true, their conduct was frequently provokingly rebellious, and of this they were ever and anon reminded; but except in the case of the molten image and that of Baalpeor, which were merely single and temporary acts, they were not guilty of open or national idolatry, but worshipped Jehovah alone, to the exclusion of all idols, during the earliest period of their national history. And it is this, and not their moral conduct generally, with which that of their descendants in the time of Jeremiah so awfully contrasted, which forms the theme of the present discourse. It might seem, indeed, at first sight, that this view of the subject is flatly contradicted by Deut. xxxii. 16, 17; but if, as is generally supposed, the Song of Moses is to be regarded as descriptive of the future character of the Israelites, the passage will not apply to the early history of that people. Or, if it does describe the past, the reference may be specifically to the worship of Baalpeor, Numb. xxv. Nor can the apparently strong passage, Ezek. xx. 5—8, be fairly adduced in opposition to the view here advocated, since the reference there is expressly limited to the conduct of the Israelites in Egypt, and cannot be extended so as to include a description of their character at Sinai, and immediately afterwards in the wilderness.

Thus saith Jehovah :

I remember in regard to thee,  
The kindness of thy youth,  
The love of thine espousals,  
Thy following of me in the desert,  
In a land unsown.

- 3 Israel was holiness to Jehovah,  
The first-fruits of his produce.  
All who devoured him contracted guilt,  
Calamity came upon them,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 4 Hear ye the word of Jehovah, O house of Jacob !  
And all ye families of the house of Israel !

The *נעוריו*, *youthful age* of the Hebrew nation is more specially defined by *קדושה*, the corresponding term in the second member of the parallelism. By this is meant not the *bridal-state*, as given by Gesenius, but the *period* elapsing from the betrothal to the nuptials. The root is *נז*, *to finish, make ready, prepare*, and, as some think, *to crown*, whence it has been inferred that Hebrew brides wore crowns before their marriage. Applied figuratively to the Hebrews, as a people, the term describes the time of their history from the exodus till the marriage contract was formally executed at Sinai. When God took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, he betrothed them to himself; and when he gave them the covenant from the mount, he took them fully into the conjugal relation. The period immediately succeeding this transaction is next noticed, during which Jehovah led them through the uncultivated desert, and there was no strange god with him, Deut. xxxii. 12. — *ק* is here neither the *Dativus commodi* nor *incommodi*, but simply the preposition of reference, the only effect of which is to give greater emphasis to the style. The phrase *אחרי*, *to walk after*, or *follow*, is of frequent occurrence in this book, with the meaning—to addict oneself to the service of any object of worship. Comp. ver. 5.

3. At the time referred to in this and the preceding verse, the Hebrews were consecrated to the sole service of Je-

hovah. They externally corresponded to the motto on the breastplate of the high-priest, *קדושה לה' שם*, HOLINESS TO JEHOVAH—the very words here put into the mouth of Jeremiah. Comp. Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2, 21. The same idea is conveyed in the following clause of the verse, in a metaphor borrowed from the practice enjoined upon the Hebrews of devoting the first-fruits of the land to the house of the Lord, Exod. xxiii. 19; Numb. xviii. 12, 13. They were the first of the nations that worshipped the true God. *הכנסת* properly means *income*, from the verb *הכנס*, *to come, come into*, and is usually applied to the produce of the field. Instead of the affix *ה*, very many MSS. read *י*; but the former, though the less frequent, occurs sufficiently often to warrant our considering it to be genuine. *הכנסתה*, “*her or its produce*,” found in two MSS., is of no authority.—Carrying forward the idea of the first-fruits, and superadding that of their being eaten, Jehovah declares, that all who ate or devoured (*אכלו*, *to eat*), i. e. injured, or attempted to destroy his people, only thereby brought destruction upon themselves. We see this verified in the overthrow or extirpation of the Amalekites, Amorites, and other nations hostile to Israel.

4. The designations here employed are not intended to apply to the two tribes and to the ten distinctively, but form a parallelism, expressive of universality.

- 5 What injustice did your fathers find in me,  
That they removed far from me,  
And followed vanity, and became vain ?
- 6 They said not : Where is Jehovah ?  
Who brought us up from the land of Egypt,  
Who led us through the desert,  
Through a land of sterility and pits,  
Through a land of drought and death-shade,  
Through a land which no man traversed,  
And where no man dwelt.
- 7 I brought you also into a garden-land,  
To eat of its fruit, and its goodly produce ;  
But ye came in, and defiled my land,  
And rendered my inheritance abominable.
- 8 The priests said not : Where is Jehovah ?  
And those who handle the law knew me not ;  
The shepherds also rebelled against me,

5. The appeal here made, though immediately addressed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, was made to all Hebrews, whether resident in Palestine, or captives in foreign lands. No appeal could have been more cogent. It was impossible to accuse Jehovah of injustice in any part of his conduct towards them. This Moses emphatically taught them in his song, Deut. xxxii. 4. Yet the fathers had most unreasonably and ungratefully exchanged his service for that of idols—*הַגִּלְגָּל*, *gail*, empty and impotent objects, the worship of which imprinted their character on the worshippers. Comp. Psalm cxv. 8.

6. A most graphic description of the vast desert of Arabia Petrea, lying between the Red Sea and Palestine, through which the Israelites wandered for the space of forty years. Dr. Robinson, describing a portion of it, says : " A more frightful desert it had hardly been our lot to behold. The mountains beyond presented a most uninviting and hideous aspect ; precipices and naked conical peaks of chalky and gravelly formation, rising one above another, without a sign of life or vegetation." Vol. ii. p. 502. The whole country, indeed, is made up of arid and barren plains, intersected by

rocky mountains, amid the precipices of which are depths and caverns of the most horrid gloom. Though here and there an oasis appears, yet the general character of the desert is that of sterility, desolation, and dreariness.

7. Not only did God watch over and protect the Israelites from the numerous and fearful dangers to which they were exposed in the wilderness, but he introduced them into a country presenting a complete contrast to it—a paradise abounding with all kinds of delightful and enriching produce. Yet, when put in possession of it, instead of enjoying it in the fear and service of their Divine Benefactor, they desecrated it by adopting the abominable idolatries of the neighbouring nations, and devoting its produce to the maintenance of idolatrous worship. See Judges ii. 10—17. To bring the charge more directly home to the then living generation, there is a change of person from the third to the second.

8. The three leading classes whose influence was most powerful are here specially selected for reprobation. The priests who were consecrated to the immediate service of Jehovah in the temple were regardless of his presence ; they did not even wish to realise the idea of

- And the prophets prophesied by Baal,  
 And followed objects which cannot profit.
- 9 Wherefore I will further contend with you,  
 Saith Jehovah,  
 And with your children's children will I contend.
- 10 For cross over to the coasts of Chittim, and see ;  
 And send to Kedar, and consider well,  
 And see whether there be any thing like this.
- 11 Hath a nation changed gods, though they are not God ?  
 But my people hath changed its glory  
 For an object which cannot profit.
- 12 Be astonished, O ye heavens ! at this,  
 Yea, be ye horrified,

him. The expounders of the law, who appear to have belonged to the order of priests (see Micah iii. 11 ; Mal. ii. 7), were ignorant of its contents. The civil rulers took an active part in violating the fundamental law of the Theocracy. And the prophets, instead of reclaiming both high and low from their apostasy, encouraged it by oracular announcements professing to have been obtained from Baal—the great idol-god of the Phœnicians and other surrounding nations. Kings and other higher rulers are frequently called *shepherds* in Scripture, because it is their office to guide, nourish, and protect those over whom they are placed. *שׂוֹמֵר* signifies *to handle, treat, be occupied with* anything, and is here used, in the participial form, to describe those whose profession consisted in teaching the contents of Divine revelation generally—not in what we should call practising the law, in the confined legal acceptance of the term. Michaelis, led away by the signification of the German verb, *handeln*, to handle, arbitrarily forces a satire into the passage—supposing the persons spoken of to be represented as having the book of the law always in their hands, but never opening it, or paying any attention to its dictates.

9. So inveterate had idolatrous habits become, that there was no prospect of the cessation of Divine judgments until they should have been entirely rooted out by their infliction.

10, 11. The idolatrous Israelites are

directed to repair to the pagan nations both in the West and the East, in order to find, if they could, a single instance in which any of them had thrown away the objects of their worship, however incapable they had proved of affording them any advantage, and adopted the equally impotent idols of some other nation in their place. No such instance was to be found. How unexampled, therefore, and how contrary to the universal feeling of mankind, the conduct of the Hebrews in exchanging the glorious object of their worship—the only living and true God, from whom they had received such distinguished benefits, for gods of wood and stone ! *כִּיּוֹנִיִּים*, a gentile noun, denoting originally the inhabitants of Cyprus, a colony of Phœnicians, who founded on that island the city of Citium, the modern Chitti. As, like the other Phœnicians, they carried on commerce on the Mediterranean, the term came to be extended to all the islands and maritime coasts of that sea, especially those of Greece. *כִּדְאֵרִים*, strictly the *Kedarenes*, descendants of Ishmael ; but the name came to be extended to the Bedowens generally, who occupied the regions to the east of Palestine. The East and West are thus beautifully placed in juxtaposition.

12, 13. In *שׁוֹמֵי שָׁמַיִם* is an evident paranomasia. A noble instance of bold and impassioned prosopœia. The conduct of the Israelites was so atrocious, that it was calculated to fill the very heavens that witnessed it with amaze-



Be ye utterly amazed,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 13 For my people have committed two evils :  
Me they have forsaken, the Fountain of living water,  
To hew out for themselves cisterns,  
Broken cisterns which contain no water.
- 14 Was Israel a slave ? Was he home-born ?  
Why is he become a spoil ?
- 15 The young lions roar at him,  
They give forth their yell ;  
They make his land desolate,  
His cities are burnt up,  
Without inhabitant.
- 16 Even the sons of Noph and Tahpanhes  
Feed down the crown of thy head.

ment and horror. There is great force in placing the pronoun *אֲנִי*, ME, before the verb in this instance, the effect of which is to give a marked degree of prominence to the Glorious Source of being and blessedness, who had been abandoned for the mere nonentities of heathen veneration. The Hebrews were accustomed to give the name of *אֵלֹהֵי חַיִּים*, *living water*, to that which welled out from a fountain and flowed along, as if possessing the property of life, in opposition to that which formed a dead and stagnant pool. With the full and overflowing fountain, Jehovah here contrasts cisterns which had become dilapidated, rent, and cracked, and instead of giving forth, could not even retain the water that might be poured into them. A striking emblem of the utter worthlessness of the objects of idolatrous worship ; and, as it respects man's highest wants, everything of an earthly nature. Receptacles for holding rain-water are very common in the East, especially in cities and along the roads. Of fountains and streams there is a great lack ; and, as the summer months frequently pass without rain, it becomes a matter of importance to preserve it in cisterns or tanks.—Instances of disagreement in gender, such as *בָּאֵרֹת וְשִׁבְרֹת*, in which the construction is not formal but logical, *i.e. ad sensum*, are too common, and too familiar to every Hebrew scholar,

to warrant the emendation of Blayney, who for *שִׁבְרֹת* proposes to read *בָּאֵרֹת*.

14—16. Hitzig improperly takes *אֵלֹהֵי* to refer to the service of God, and not to a state of slavery. The parallel *בְּיָד בֵּית*, *born in the house*, determines the latter to be the true meaning, this phrase never being used of anything else : so that the position taken by Blayney, who interprets it of a *son of the family*, cannot be sustained. The natural answer to the question here put is, No ; Israel was Jehovah's son, even his first-born. Exod. iv. 22. It has been questioned whether these verses describe past historical events, or whether they are prophetic of the future. Eichhorn and Dahler, taking the name *Israel* in its restricted meaning in application to the ten tribes, suppose the reference to be to their having been removed by the Assyrians, and reduced to a state of servitude—a fate which the Jews might likewise expect if they put their confidence in the Egyptians. But for this opinion there does not appear to be sufficient ground. The Jews, who are addressed, ver. 16, are identified with Israel in the preceding verses, as the continuation of the address in ver. 17 shows. Though *וְדָרָה*, ver. 14, imparts its influence to the following futures, so as to give them a past bearing, yet they all mark the prophetic future, which assumes the form of the past, in order to express

- 17 Hast thou not done this to thyself,  
Forsaking Jehovah thy God,  
At the time when he led thee in the way ?
- 18 And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt,  
To drink the water of Shihor ?  
And what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria,  
To drink the water of the river ?
- 19 Thine own wickedness shall correct thee,  
And thy apostate deeds shall chastise thee :

the certainty of the events. The English present has something of the same force. The language is anticipative of what would soon take place in the history of the Jews. The young lions denote the Babylonian princes, who were to invade and lay desolate the land. For the roaring of the lion, see on Amos iii. 4. Instead of *הָאֶרֶץ*, *it*, *i.e.* the land is burned, the Keri has *הָעָרִים*, *they*, *i.e.* the cities. This reading is supported by the text of many MSS. and of two ancient editions. The LXX. have read *κατεσκαφισαν*, and have been followed by the Targ. and the Syr.—*Noph* and *Takpanhes* were two ancient cities of Egypt; the former, called by the Greeks *Memphis*, was the celebrated capital of the lower division of the country, and was situated on the western bank of the Nile, at a short distance from the pyramids of Gizel, and from Cairo, the modern capital, on the opposite bank. See my Comment. on Isaiah xix. 13. *הָעִיר הַזֹּאת*, or, according to the Keri and the textual reading of many of the best MSS. and that of the earliest editions, *הָעִיר הַזֹּאת*, and supposed by some to be abbreviated by Isaiah xxx. 4, into *זֵיט*, was no doubt the strongly fortified city of *Daphne*, situated on the Tanitic branch of the Nile, near Pelusium, on the frontier of Egypt towards Palestine. LXX. *τάφνη*. Being one of the important cities of Egypt with which the Jews came in contact, it and the capital came to be used by them as standing for the country, or the government itself. The event here predicted was doubtless the invasion of Judea by Pharaoh-Necho on his return from the Euphrates, on which occasion he deposed Jehoahaz, and condemned the land to a heavy tribute of silver and gold, which

he carried with him into Egypt. 2 Kings xxiii. 33—35. The previous melancholy death of Josiah may be included. The construction in *לְדָרְךָ* is the same as in *לְשִׁיחָךְ* and *לְשִׁיחָךְ*, Gen. iii. 15. The hair of the head being held in high estimation among the Hebrews, baldness was regarded as ignominious and humiliating. To this condition the Jewish kingdom was reduced by the Egyptian monarch, in whose aid against the Babylonians they were ever prone to trust. This last circumstance accounts for the emphatic use of *עַד*, *even*, at the commencement of the verse. *לְדָרְךָ* the LXX. have mistaken for *לְדָרְךָ*. The Syr. adopts the root *דָּרַךְ*.

17. Most of the moderns take *לְדָרְךָ* to be the nominative to the verb, and in apposition with *לְשִׁיחָךְ*, and render: "Is it not this that hath procured it to thee—thy forsaking," &c.; but the common rendering seems more appropriate, as it includes both the agent and the act, charging directly upon the former the guilt contracted by the latter.—By *the way* is meant the right way, the way of the Lord; and the leading of the Jews therein denotes the whole of the moral training which they enjoyed under the Mosaic dispensation. In spite of every motive to the contrary, they forsook Jehovah as the object of their fear and confidence.

18, 19. In the former of these verses there is a distinct recognition of the strong propensity of the Jews to put their confidence in the Assyrians and Egyptians alternately, according as the arms of either could be rendered available on their behalf. Their drinking of the water of their rivers is expressive of their obtaining from them the means of

Know therefore and see that thy forsaking Jehovah thy God  
Is an evil, and a bitter thing;  
And that the fear of me is not in thee,  
Saith the Lord Jehovah of hosts.

- 20 Surely of old thou hast broken thy yoke,  
Thou hast burst thy bonds,  
And hast said: I will not obey;  
Surely upon every high hill,

re-invigoration when oppressed by their enemies. By the דֶּרֶךְ, *way* of those two nations, some think their idolatrous religion is meant; but there is no historical proof that the Jews ever repaired to Egypt or Assyria for the purpose of adopting the idols of these countries. The hypothesis is founded upon the admitted fact that the word sometimes signifies religion, and has been thought to derive support from its having been employed in this acception in the preceding verse. The circumstance, however, just adverted to, forms an insuperable objection to its adoption.—נֹכַח, *now*, at the beginning of the verse, is to be taken, not in its temporal, but in its ratiocinative acception.—Gesenius, Winer, and Rosenmüller, following the rendering of the LXX., *Τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ*, render יֵדְךָ וְדֶרֶךְ, “What is there common to thee and the way,” &c., and suppose the phrase to correspond to וְכִי לִי וְכִי לָהֶם, “What is there to me and to thee?” *i. e.* what is there in common to us? what have we to do with each other? but there is no instance in which this idiomatic form occurs without the copula, and there is no necessity for supposing an ellipsis to exist in the present case.—By שִׁיחֹר, *Shihor*, *i. e.* the *Black River*, is meant the Nile, which is so called on account of its muddy and turbid appearance, and especially of the black deposit or soil which it leaves after the inundations. For the same reason it obtained the corresponding name of *Mélas* from the Greeks. Comp. Is. xxiii. 3. The LXX. have *Γήων*, *Gihon*, the name of one of the rivers of Paradise, which the ancients very preposterously believed to be the Nile, and which Gesenius and some others view in the same light. וְכִי, *the River* κατ' ἐξοχὴν, means, both

with and without the article, the *Euphrates*, and is here used metaphorically to denote the Babylonian power, just as *Shihor*, or the Nile, is to denote that of Egypt.—יָדְךָ, ver. 19, is not to be taken in the milder signification of instruct, as Michaelis proposes, but in the severer one of *punish, castigate*. וְיָדְךָ, which primarily signifies to convince, prove, and the like, has also here the severer signification of *punish, correct* by afflictive discipline. אֲפֹסְתִים, *apostasies*, or apostate deeds, in the plural, to express the number and variety of defections from Jehovah with which the Jews were chargeable. The very confederacies into which the Jews entered with heathen powers, proved the occasion of their overthrow. They were, therefore, by their renunciation of confidence in Jehovah, and their transfer of it to those powers, themselves the authors of the calamities which befell them. וְ in וְכִי is illative, and is to be rendered *therefore*. וְכִי and וְכִי are coupled together, just as וְכִי and וְכִי are, for the sake of emphasis. The preposition לִ in the phrase, לִי וְכִי, is expressive, not of motion to a place, but of rest in it, as Deut. xvi. 6; 1 Kings viii. 30. The affix in וְכִי is that of object, and not of possession.

20. Instead of reading וְכִי and וְכִי as the first person, the words should be pointed, וְכִי and וְכִי, a form of the second person feminine which is very common in Jeremiah. See ver. 33; chap. iii. 4, 5; iv. 19; xiii. 21; xxii. 23; xxxi. 21; xlv. 11. Comp. Ezek. xvi. 13, 19. This feminine affirmative is a fragment of the less frequent form of the second personal pronoun of the feminine gender אַתְּ, the more ancient pronunciation of which must have been אַתְּ, as the Syriac still has it. It is

- And under every green tree,  
 Thou hast stretched thyself, O harlot !  
 21 I, indeed, planted thee a noble vine,  
 Wholly a genuine seed :  
 How then art thou changed with respect to me  
 Into the degenerate shoots of a strange vine ?  
 22 Though thou wash thyself with nitre,  
 And take thee much potash,  
 Yet thine iniquity is ingrained before me,  
 Saith the Lord Jehovah.

found here in the text of one or two MSS., and has the support of the LXX., Arab., Hexaplar, Syr., and Vulg.; and in the latter verb, of Aquila and Theodotion. It is also approved by Aurivillius, Michaëlis, Blayney, Rosenmüller, Scholz, Maurer, and Hitzig. The context requires the verbs to be thus read, it being less suitable to introduce here the deliverance of the Jews from oppression by their enemies, than to insist upon their long-continued habit of breaking through the restraints of the Divine law. "Thy yoke," and "thy bands," mean the yoke and bands laid upon thee. Comp. chap. v. 5.—For יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, *I will not serve*, a great number of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., and more than thirteen editions, exhibit יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, *I will not transgress*, which is the reading of the Keri; but this lection is approved by none of the moderns, Zunz and Ewald alone excepted. The LXX. has οὐ δουλεύσω σοι.—שָׁחָה is the feminine participle of שָׁחָה, *to turn, incline, bend, stretch out oneself*; and is here employed metaphorically to express the act of prostration to idols. Thus Rosenmüller: Prophetæ mens est, Judæos, in falsorum numinum honorem passim *se inclinantes*, æque fædo et infami flagitio *se inquinare*, ac meretricem, sine ullo pudore *se inclinantes* ad corpus vulgo publicandum. Quæ comparatio eo luculentior est, quod soleant Sacri Scriptores *idololatricæ* turpitudinem per scortationis figuram exprimere. The Jews had become lost to all sense of shame, and indulged in idol-worship wherever it was practised.

21. See my note on Isaiah v. 3, and comp. Ps. lxxx. 9, where the same me-

taphor is similarly employed. The absence of the article before an adjective, as in נִיטְרָה, is not without other examples. See chap. xxii. 26; Gen. xxix. 2; Ezek. xxxix. 27.

22. The inveterate proneness of the Jews to idolatry is here forcibly expressed. There may be a reference in what is said about washing to the reformation begun by Josiah, which was compulsory, and not voluntary on their part. Their outward profession was specious, but it was altogether hollow and insincere.—נִיטְרָה, *nitre*, is not the substance now known by this name, which is the saltpetre of commerce, but the *natron* of Egypt and other parts of the East,—a mineral alkali which is found deposited at the bottom of lakes in a thick incrustation after the summer heat has evaporated the water. It was used for washing linen, and other household purposes. בִּרְחָה, *potash*, the carbonate of which is obtained in an impure state from the burning of different plants, especially the kali, found in Egypt and Arabia. See on Is. i. 25. It was likewise used, mixed with oil, for washing. To נִיטְרָה all the ancient versions attach the idea of *spotted*; but this idea ill accords with the special iniquities here referred to, as such may be predicated of all iniquity. Neither is the signification *hidden*, derived from the Arabic

كُتِمَ, *abscondit*, any more appropriate in connexion with the face of Jehovah,—sin being uniformly represented in Scripture as open to his view. I, therefore, agree with Dr. Meier, who in his Lexi-

- 23 How canst thou say: I am not polluted,  
I have not followed the Baals?  
Look at thy way in the valley,  
Know what thou hast done:  
A light young she-camel rambling in her courses,
- 24 A wild ass accustomed to the desert,  
In her strong desire she snuffeth up the wind,  
As for her heat, who can repel it?  
None of all that seek her shall be wearied,  
In her month they will find her.
- 25 Withhold thy foot from being unshod,  
And thy throat from thirst:

con. of Hebrew Roots, p. 347, adopts the signification which Kimchi expresses by *כָּתוּב*, *cut in, engraved, &c.* I have rendered the verb by *ingrained*, which denotes what cannot be washed or removed out of any thing, and seems best to suit the connexion. *כָּתוּב* and *כָּתוּב* are cognates.

23. *כָּתוּב*, the valley *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, is the Valley of Hinnom, which runs along the south side of Mount Zion, and was infamous for the celebration of the horrid rites of Moloch in the times of the idolatrous kings of Judah. 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 31. These rites were abolished by Josiah, who rendered the place abominable by ordering the bones of the dead to be cast into it, from which time it became a receptacle for the filth of the city, and was known by the name of Tophet, which signifies loathing or abomination—a name, however, given to it in the time of Isaiah. See on chap. xxx. 33. The LXX. have *πολυάνθριον*, i. e. the place of the multitude of dead bodies, with manifest reference to chap. vii. 32. Moloch was one of the Baals to the worship of which the Jews were addicted. Their unsteady, wanton, and roving conduct, now engaging in the service of Jehovah, and now in that of Moloch and other heathen deities, could only be fitly represented by the light-footed young female camel, running in all directions in quest of a male. The participle chosen to express this rambling about is very emphatic—the verb *כָּתוּב* signifying to *interweave*, and, in applica-

tion to a course, to make it take every direction, so as to resemble a thicket, the branches of which cross each other at all points.

24. *כָּתוּב* or *כָּתוּב*, as it is spelt in a great number of MSS. and several editions, the *onager*, or wild ass of the mule kind, remarkable for its velocity, and still found in a wild state in the deserts of central Asia. The vehemence with which the female of this species of animals courses the desert in pursuit of a male, snuffing the wind in order to ascertain where one may be found, is further selected to set forth the uncontrollable impulse to idolatry which dwelt in the hearts of the Jews. For *כָּתוּב*, seventy-eight MSS., originally eleven more, and some of the earlier editions, read *כָּתוּב*, *heat, fervent inclination, sexual*

*impulse*, from the Arab. *أَنَّى*, *fervet*,

*summo ardore ferbuit aqua*. By the *month* of the wild ass is meant the particular season when the impulse for copulation was strongest. Instead of then keeping to the desert, she would be found frequenting those places in which the tame asses were in pasture, so that there would be no difficulty in finding her.

25. Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, and some others consider the reference here to be to idolatrous acts viewed as those of a lewd person, who not only exposes herself, but cries out for paramours. Hitzig thinks that the walking barefoot has respect to religious penance to which the

- But thou sayest : It is hopeless ;  
 No, I have loved strangers,  
 And after them I will go.
- 26 As a thief is put to shame when found,  
 So the house of Israel are put to shame ;  
 They, their kings, their princes,  
 Their priests, and their prophets.
- 27 Who say to a block, Thou art my father,  
 And to a stone, Thou hast borne me ;  
 For they have turned to me the back, and not the face ;  
 Yet in the time of their calamity they will say :  
 Arise, and deliver us !
- 28 But where are thy gods which thou hast made for thyself ?  
 Let them arise, if they can deliver thee in the time of thy  
 calamity ;  
 For according to the number of thy cities  
 Are thy gods, O Judah !
- 29 To what purpose will ye contend with me ?  
 Ye have, all of you, rebelled against me,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 30 In vain I have smitten your children,

Jews submitted in the service of idols, and that the thirst was occasioned by the loud and continued invocations which they presented to them. The more probable meaning is, that they are exhorted no longer to undertake fruitless journeys to places of idolatrous worship, in performing which they wore out their shoes, injured their feet, and exposed themselves to extreme thirst. וַיִּשְׁתּוּ is properly corrected in the Keri into וַיִּשְׁתּוּ. The latter half of the verse expresses the desperate resolution of the hardened and incorrigible to persevere in their wicked courses.

26—28. That “the house of Israel” is not here to be understood of the ten tribes, but of all the Hebrews at the time remaining in the Holy Land, is sufficiently determined by the adoption of the designation *Judah* in ver. 28. The declaration made in ver. 26, is anticipative of the state to which the apostate Jews should be reduced at the captivity. They might then apply to

their idols for deliverance, but, numerous as they were, not one of them would be able to afford any help. Besides certain deities which they worshipped in common, each city had its own tutelary god from which protection was expected. Though וַיִּשְׁתּוּ, the reading of the Keri, has the suffrage of upwards of sixty MSS., several printed editions, and the Targum, yet the textual וַיִּשְׁתּוּ is supported by the LXX., Arab., Syr., and Vulg. There are also MSS. in which the Keri is altogether omitted.

29, 30. It was in the highest degree presumptuous to bring any charge against Jehovah for leaving them at the mercy of their enemies ; they had transferred their allegiance from him to other gods, and had no claim on his protection. They had only themselves to blame for what befell them. They had been partially visited with afflictive circumstances with a view to the correction of the evils to which they were addicted, but these had produced no real reformation. By וַיִּשְׁתּוּ,

- They have not taken reproof;  
 Your own sword hath devoured your prophets,  
 Like a destroying lion.
- 31 O ye the generation!  
 Regard the word of Jehovah.  
 Have I been a desert to Israel?  
 Or a land of darkness?  
 Why do my people say: We ramble at large,  
 We will come to thee no more?
- 32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments?  
 A bride her girdles?  
 Yet my people have forgotten me  
 Days without number.
- 33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love?  
 Surely thou hast taught even the wicked females thy ways.

*children*, ver. 30, we are to understand the people of the Jews themselves, comprehending the parents as well as their offspring. The universality of the language in ver. 29 shows this. Instead of listening to the warnings of the prophets whom Jehovah had sent to them, they put them to death. Comp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Matt. xxiii. 30, 31.

31. Though *הָיָה* and *הָיָה* are separated by the *Rebiah*, they are intimately connected. The exclamation is highly impassioned. Its apostate character was so flagrant and unparalleled, that the generation required only to be mentioned in order to call its features prominently into view. The questions here put are to be met with the most pointed negative. So far was Jehovah from proving a niggardly and austere sovereign to the Jews, that he had evinced himself to be their most liberal benefactor. Nothing but wantonness could have induced them to renounce their subjection to him. *בְּחֹלְהָם*, from

*אָל*, Arab. *أَفَل*, *to set*, as the sun, and

so to become or be *dark*. A variety in point of orthography is found in the MSS., but evidently either from negligence or conjecture. The noun is compounded of *חֹשֶׁךְ*, *darkness*, and *הָ* (for *הָיָה*) the abbreviation of *הָיָה*, *Jehovah*; *i.e.*

*darkness of Jehovah*, such as he only could produce. It is more expressive than *חֹשֶׁךְ*, *death-shade*, and is the strongest term by which darkness is expressed in Hebrew. Compare as to form, *סֶלֶחָה*, Song viii. 6.—For *הָיָה*, *to ramble about* in an unbridled manner, see my Comment. on Hos. xii. 1. The Jews had thrown off the reins, and rambled at large in pursuit of idolatrous gratification. Their determination to persevere in such a course is strongly expressed by the declaration that they would no more return to the service of Jehovah.

32. Image upon image is selected in order to prove to the Jews the inconsistency of their conduct. The Oriental females wear a great profusion of ornaments, such as rings, nose and ear jewels, bracelets, &c., many of them of great value and beauty. In these, and in their girdles, which are often beautifully embroidered, they greatly pride themselves. The dresses and ornaments of brides are particularly gay and imposing.

33. *הָיָה*, *way*, here signifies *mode of procedure*, course of life. The Jews employed every possible means to render their idolatrous practices attractive and gratifying. They were more practised in the arts of seduction than abandoned females. The redundant ' in *הָיָה* is a fragment of the less frequent form of the

- 34 Even in thy skirts hath been found  
The blood of poor innocent souls ;  
Not by deep search have I found them,  
But upon all these.
- 35 Yet thou sayest : Because I am innocent,  
Surely his anger will turn back from me ;  
Behold, I will enter into judgment with thee,  
Because thou sayest : I have not sinned.
- 36 Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way ?  
Thou shalt also be ashamed of Egypt,  
As thou wast ashamed of Assyria.
- 37 Thence also thou shalt go forth,  
With thy hands on thy head ;  
For Jehovah hath despised the objects of thy confidence,  
And thou shalt have no success through them.

feminine pronoun *היא*. It occurs especially in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but is uniformly removed in the Keri.

34. Of Manasseh it is recorded, that " he shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." 2 Kings xxi. 16. Such atrocities had not been perpetrated in subterraneous caverns, as too horrible to bear the light of day, but openly in the valley of Hinnom, within the sacred precincts of the temple, and in other places about Jerusalem. These are graphically pointed to for the sake of effect.

35. Nothing but the hardening influence of depravity can induce men who are sunk in the very depth of crime to make an avowal of innocence. Yet, how frequently is this exhibited in the history of our race !

36. *היא* for *הוא*. See Gesen. Heb. Gram. § 67, 2. Estranged from Jehovah as the true object of confidence, the Jews turned now to one quarter and now to another for help—modo Assyrios, modo Ægyptios.—*C. B. Michaelis*. To whichever of these two great powers they might apply, nothing but disappointment was the result. See 2 Chron. xxviii. 16—21 ; Jer. xxxvii. 7, 8.

37. *היא*, *this*, refers to the king of Egypt, to whom the Jews applied for help against the Babylonians ; but, as the name of the country is put in the preceding verse for the ruling power, a local signification must be given to it in the translation. Putting the hands on the head is a very natural attitude of mourning. Comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. The preposition in *בָּהֶן* marks the dative of instrumentality, as Ps. xii. 5.

### CHAPTER III.

The first five verses of this chapter contain a brief discourse, separately communicated to the prophet, in which Jehovah, contrary to all expectation, promises to give the Jews a gracious reception, if they would only return to him in sincerity. With the sixth verse a new portion of the book begins, which is



continued to the end of the sixth chapter. It begins by charging the Jews with having rendered themselves more guilty than the ten tribes whose kingdom had been entirely destroyed as a punishment for their idolatry, 6—11. An invitation is then given to these tribes to turn to God by true repentance, together with a promise of the renewal of covenant engagements, and the restoration of pious and skilful rulers, 12—15. Next follows a prediction of gospel times, when the Hebrews generally should be restored, and the Gentiles called into the Church, 16—19. And the chapter concludes with mingled expressions of repentance on the part of the people, and of gracious assurances on that of Jehovah, 20—25.

- 
- 1 FURTHER, if a man send away his wife,  
And she go from him, and become another man's,  
Will he return to her again?  
Should not that land be greatly polluted?  
But thou hast committed lewdness with many paramours,  
Yet return to me, saith Jehovah.
  - 2 Raise thine eyes to the high places,  
And look where thou hast not been lain with;  
Beside the roads thou hast sat for them,  
Like an Arab in the desert;  
And hast polluted the land  
With thy lewdnesses and with thy wickedness.

1. Though **לֵאמֹר**, *saying*, is wanting in one MS. and has nothing corresponding to it in the LXX., Arab., and Syr. versions, there can be no doubt of its being genuine. The only satisfactory way of accounting for its occupying its isolated and anomalous position is to suppose, that the words **וְיָדִי וְיָדֵי הָעָם** have been omitted by some early copyist, and that the omission has been perpetuated in transcription. Ewald conjectures that both these words and the date have been removed to ver. 6, in which case the discourse contained in this and the following chapters must have commenced here. Without actually supplying this omission, I have employed the term *further*, which implies it.—The argument here is founded on the fact, that when a Hebrew had divorced his wife, and she had been married to another, it was not lawful for him to take her back. Deut. xxiv. 1—4. The Jews had worshipped not one idol only, but many, and richly deserved to be for ever repudiated; yet

God in mercy invites them to return to him. **שׁוּב** is the Infinitive absolute, and as such may be used as an Imperative of both genders.

2. A graphic description of what had been alleged at the close of the previous verse. Not satisfied with sacrificing to idols on the high places, which were generally selected for such worship, the Jews were so hardened, that, like a strumpet, Gen. xxxviii. 14, 21; Prov. vii. 12, and, like a robber Arab, they sedulously watched for every opportunity of gratifying their wicked propensity. A few MSS. and the Soncín. edition exhibit **וְיָדֵי הָעָם**, which the Keri, as usual, proposes to be read instead of **וְיָדֵי הָעָם**, which the Masorites regarded as obscene. The Arabs of the desert to the east and south of Palestine were notorious for their habit of robbing travellers, as they still are at the present day. See Diod. Sic. lib. ii. cap. 48; Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. vi. cap. 28; Harmer's Obser. vol. i. p. 150, 8vo. 1808.

- 3 Therefore the showers have been withheld,  
And there hath been no latter rain ;  
Thou hast the brow of a harlot,  
Thou hast refused to be ashamed.
- 4 Wilt thou not henceforth cry to me, My Father!  
Thou wast the guide of my youth?
- 5 Will he keep his anger for ever?  
Will he always mark for punishment?  
Behold ! thou hast spoken it,  
Yet thou hast done wicked deeds as thou couldst.
- 6 Jehovah said also to me in the days of Josiah the king : Hast  
thou seen what apostate Israel did? She went upon every  
high mountain, and under every green tree, and there she  
7 acted lewdly. And I said after she had done all these  
things : Return unto me ; but she did not return, and her  
8 faithless sister Judah saw it. And I saw, that though it was

3. The former and latter rains are essential to the prosperity of the crops in Palestine. These had been withheld in judgment, but without effect on the Jews, who recklessly pursued their wicked courses.

4, 5. C. B. Michaelis thinks there is a reference here to the reformation begun the year before, which was the twelfth of Josiah ; but the language is rather tenderly expostulatory than descriptive of fact. אב, *father*, and חֵן, *friend*, or *guide*, are here used with exquisite effect. The latter, construed with נַעֲרָם, *youth*, is equivalent to *husband*. See Prov. ii. 17. They were the two most endearing appellations that could have been employed, and are proposed for adoption by the Jews, in order to affect their minds, and induce repentance. By a striking change of person the Jews are introduced, ver. 5—not as repenting and forsaking their idolatry and other sins, but—as simply deprecating the continuance of Divine judgments. They were still determined to addict themselves to false worship. נָאֵר and נָאֵר are used elliptically. נָאֵר is understood in both instances.

6. Here commences a new discourse, which is continued to the end of the sixth chapter. It is divisible into two parts : the first consisting of ver. 6—

chap. iv. 2 ; the second of iv. 3—vi. The specification of the date, though assigning the reign of Josiah, is still indefinite. Maurer refers the prophecy to his seventeenth year, shortly after the foundation of the Babylonian empire by Nabopolassar. It certainly must have been delivered before the second and thorough reformation effected by that prince in the eighteenth year of his reign. The Jews are here called to reflect on the conduct of Israel, or the ten tribes, and the punishment with which, in consequence of it, they had been visited. They had eagerly frequented the high places and the groves, and taken part in all the abominations which were there perpetrated. רִשְׁתָּהּ, *defection, apostasy*, the abstract put for the concrete שִׁנְתָּהּ. The word is placed before the proper name, with which it is in apposition, in order the more forcibly to give prominence to the evil. Comp. ver. 12, 14, 22. The Yod in יָנִי, is not the mark of the Second Person Feminine, but merely the substitution of the ' for the corresponding feeble letter י, as in יָנִי, chap. xviii. 23.

7—10. As the two kingdoms were sisters politically, so they had been in crime. That of Judah, instead of avoiding the sin which had brought destruction upon Israel, or profiting by the judgments

- entirely because apostate Israel had committed adultery, I had sent her away, and given her a bill of divorce, yet faithless Judah was not afraid, but went and acted lewdly
- 9 also. And it came to pass, that through the vileness of her harlotry she defiled the land, and committed adultery with
- 10 the stones and the blocks. And yet, notwithstanding all this, her faithless sister Judah hath not turned to me with all her heart, but with falsity, saith Jehovah.
- 11 And Jehovah said to me : Apostate Israel hath shewn herself
- 12 to be righteous in comparison of faithless Judah. Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say :
- Return, O apostate Israel ! saith Jehovah,  
I will not continue to frown upon you ;

which God had inflicted upon her, indulged in the same wickedness, and so incurred the same guilt. The metaphor of a divorce being here employed to illustrate the rejection of the kingdom of the ten tribes, seems to refer back to ver. 1,—a circumstance which gives some support to the hypothesis of Ewald noticed in the note on ver. 1. A bill of divorce is called in Hebrew פְּדוּתָא, *a writing*, or document of cutting off, Deut. xxiv. 1, 3 ; Is. i. 1 ; and here in the plural, פְּדוּתָא, *a writing of cuttings off*, because she to whom such a document was given by her husband was cut off from all connexion with him. The marriage relation was entirely and for ever dissolved. נִקְרָא instead of נִקְרָה for the sake of more forcible expression. נִקְרָא, ver. 9, is a noun derived from the Infinitive of נִקְרָא, *to be light, despised, treated as vile*, with the prepositive Mem ; and not, as Schmurrer, Rosenmüller, De Wette, and Maurer suppose, the abbreviated form of נִקְרָא, *voice* ; or, as J. D. Michaelis and Hitzig think it should be pointed, נִקְרָא, *a staff*, or *stick*, a construction which is quite intolerable here. The conjecture of Ewald, that נִקְרָא is equivalent to נִקְרָא, *infamy, disgrace*, is well founded. I have adopted the term *vileness*, as best suited to the context. The noun is formed from נִקְרָא, as נִקְרָא, נִקְרָא are from the roots נִקְרָא, נִקְרָא. The LXX. have εἰς οὐθέν. Jerome : *facilitas*. —הַבְּרָצִים and הַבְּרָצִים are collective nouns, denoting here idols made of stone and

wood. That the subject of reference, ver. 9, is Israel and not Judah, is clearly determined by the contrast in the following verse.—נִקְרָא, ver. 10, Hitzig interprets of the sins of Judah, and not of the rejection and punishment of Israel ; but the formula, which occurs frequently in Isaiah, is always used of judgments.—Whatever professions of amendment the Jews made were hypocritical and insincere.

11. צַדִּיק, *to be right, just* ; in Piel, צַדִּיק, as in Hiphil, *to make, declare, or show any one to be righteous*. The conduct of the inhabitants of the land in the time of the prophet was so much more aggravated than that of the ten tribes, by reason of the exemplary punishment of the latter, of which they had been witnesses, the manifold instruction with which they had been favoured, and especially the pious example and zealous exertions of Josiah, that it quite eclipsed the guilt contracted by their northern brethren. Israel appeared innocent in comparison of Judah. Comp. for this mode of speech, Ezck. xvi. 51, 52.

12. In order to excite the Jews to speedy repentance by a godly jealousy, the prophet is charged to address himself in the language of kindly invitation and encouragement on the part of Jehovah to the ten tribes then in captivity in Babylon and Media. Comp. Rom. xi. 14. The use of הֵלֵךְ, *Go*, does not necessarily imply that Jeremiah was to take a journey into those distant parts, but is

'For I am merciful, saith Jehovah,  
I will not keep my anger for ever.

13. Only acknowledge thine iniquity,  
That thou hast rebelled against Jehovah thy God,  
And hast scattered thy ways to the strangers,  
Under every green tree;  
And to my voice ye have not hearkened,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 14 Return, O apostate children ! saith Jehovah ;  
Though I have rejected you,  
Yet I will take you,

used idiomatically, and is almost pleonastic. He was to turn and proclaim his message towards the localities in which those tribes were in a state of captivity. In *שָׁמָּה* is a marked paronomasia. The construction of *שָׁמָּה* is *ad sensum*, עַם, people, being understood. *הָיָה לִי*, to cause the countenance to fall, either in sorrow, or in anger. The latter is here meant: to be angry with any one, to frown upon him, to cause him to experience the effects of such anger, to punish him. As punishment had overtaken the ten tribes, and they were still subject to it, the phrase is to be regarded as having the full force of the future, and is to be so rendered as to imply that they should not experience it in perpetuity. The merciful and forgiving character of Jehovah is the grand incentive to repentance. For *שָׁמָּה* see on ver. 5.

13. The conviction and confession of sin are indispensable to its forgiveness. The Israelites had not been contented with indulging in idolatry at one particular spot, such as Bethel, but they had followed their idolatrous courses in every direction, worshipping the gods of the different nations by which they were surrounded.

14. In *שָׁמָּה* is another touching paronomasia. The phrase *שָׁמָּה*, which occurs only here and chap. xxxi. 32, has occasioned no small difference of opinion among interpreters. The LXX., Vulg., Muuster, Vatablus, Calvin, Schmidius, Scholz, Maurer, Hitzig, Ewald, and Hengstenberg, express the idea of master, lord, or husband—a signification which the verb, without the preposition, cer-

tainly has everywhere in the Hebrew Bible. By some, the continuance or renewal of the conjugal relation is supposed to be intended; by others, domination in the way of severe treatment; by others, protection, possession, and the like. Hengstenberg has taken great pains to establish the idea of marriage; but, in my opinion, he completely fails in invalidating the position maintained by Abulwalid, Joseph Kimchi, Rabbi Tanchum, Pococke, Schultens, Venema, Schnurrer, Dathe, Rosenmüller, De Wette, Winer, Gaab, and Gesenius, viz., that the Heb. *שָׁמָּה* has the same signification with the corresponding Arabic,

بَعَلَ *mente turbatus et attonitus*

*fuit, nesciens quid faceret; timuit, fustidivit, rejecit, respuit, aspernatur.* Not only is this signification of *loathing, rejecting, &c.*, sustained by the Jewish authorities just quoted, who were well acquainted with the Arabic language, but it is ably defended by the profound Oriental scholars, Pococke and Schultens. The former, at the close of a long and very learned note, in which he reasons out the point, adds: His ergo rationibus moti, cum et loci circumstantia, et versionum antiquarum præcipua, et Rabbiorum doctissimi, et linguæ Arabicæ usus perpetuus calculum adjuvant, nulli dubitamus pronuntiare, eandem olim hoc loco, [Jer. xxxi. 32.] quæ et hodie receptam fuisse lectionem; ut olim LXX. Senibus et Syro, verba Prophetæ reddere [*Quapropter eos fastidivi, nolui, desperavi, ἡμέλησα, &c.*] nihil eos facturos quod à vocis

- One of a city, and two of a family,  
 And will bring you to Zion ;  
 15 And I will give you shepherds after my own heart,  
 And they shall feed you with knowledge and skill.  
 16 And it shall come to pass,  
 When ye are increased, and fruitful in the land,  
 In those days, saith Jehovah,  
 That men shall no more say :  
 The ark of the covenant of Jehovah ;  
 Neither shall it be thought of ;  
 Neither shall it be remembered ;  
 Neither shall it be missed ;  
 Neither shall it be made any more.

בָּאֲלִי, *Baalli*, significatio alienum sit, imo forsitan quod ei, cum præpositione ב, *Be*, constructæ, non optimè omnium atque unicè quadret.—Notes to Porta Mosis, p. 9. Schultens in his Commentary on Prov. xxx. 23, among other significations adduces the following from the Kamoos : Denique בָּאֲלִי in l. signat, perplexus fuit, et impatientia laboravit, et tædio fastidioque affectus fuit in negotio suo, nescius quid faciendum foret. What is taught both here and chap. xxxi. 32, is that God had rejected the Israelites or treated them as the objects of his displeasure on account of their apostasy from him, delivering them over into the hand of their enemies, and depriving them of all the privileges of the covenant people. There is thus an agreement in sense with *ἡμέτερος*, by which the LXX. (followed by the Syr.) render בָּאֲלִי in the latter passage, and which the Apostle Paul has adopted in his quotation, Heb. viii. 9. There is consequently no necessity for having recourse either to בָּאֲלִי or to בָּאֲלִי as the reading of the text, which some have proposed by way of conjecture. The objection of Hengstenberg, that rendering בָּאֲלִי by *although* is altogether arbitrary, cannot be sustained, as must be evident to any one who will consult Noldius on the particle, No. 15. See especially Gen. viii. 21 ; Deut. xxix. 18 ; Josh. xvii. 18 ; Jer. iv. 30. The copulative before בָּאֲלִי does not connect that verb with בָּאֲלִי, and thus borrow from it

the power of the preterite, but with בָּאֲלִי, and consequently, as dependent on the contingency therein implied, is future in signification.—The meaning of what is specified in regard to number is somewhat doubtful. It may either be, that however few the converts might be, Jehovah would not despise them, but would restore them to their own land ; or that, should there only be one found in a foreign city, or two in any one of the nations whither they had been scattered, they should not be forgotten, but should be brought back along with their brethren who formed more numerous bodies during the exile. The latter construction seems the preferable. Comp. Deut. xxx. 1—5. בָּאֲלִי does not here signify *family*, in the more restricted acceptation of the term, but in that of tribe, clan, or people. Hengstenberg strangely interprets the cities of those belonging to the land of Canaan, and not of those in foreign countries.

15. By shepherds or pastors in the Old Testament are not meant religious teachers, but civil rulers, as kings, princes, &c. See on chap. ii. 8. Such rulers as those here described were Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, Judas Maccabeus, &c., who were raised up to manage and protect the affairs of the restored state. בָּאֲלִי and בָּאֲלִי are both used adverbially.

16, 17. These verses contain a distinct announcement, that when the Hebrews should be restored, they would no longer possess what was accounted the most

- 17 At that time Jerusalem shall be called  
 The throne of Jehovah;  
 And all the nations shall be gathered to it,  
 To the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem:  
 And they shall no more walk  
 After the obstinacy of their wicked heart.
- 18 In those days  
 The house of Judah shall go with the house of Israel,  
 And they shall come unitedly from the north country,  
 To the country which I gave as an inheritance  
 To your fathers.

sacred object of the temple furniture—the ark in which were deposited the two tables of the covenant, and over which were the cherubim, overshadowing it as the throne of Jehovah. It disappeared when the temple was plundered by the Babylonians, and all the Jewish authorities are agreed, that it was never restored, or replaced in the second temple. The varied and repetitious forms in which its absence is here described, taken in connexion with the promise, that Jerusalem itself should be the throne of Jehovah, and the resort of all the nations, show that its removal was to be regarded as a boon rather than a privation. How this could be, it may at first sight seem difficult to conceive. All difficulty, however, will vanish, if, with Calvin, we regard the ark as the object, the possession of which formed a principal ground of glorying on the part of the Jews over their brethren of the ten tribes, whom they had long been accustomed to consider as having no part with them in the enjoyment of the Divine presence. This view is confirmed by what follows, ver. 18. In the removal of the ark, and its non-restoration, there was a striking intimation of the cessation of symbolical and ceremonial institutions, which was so soon to follow the restoration of the Hebrews to their own land: an event with which was to be connected the admission of the Gentiles to a joint participation in the privileges of the church of God. Of this, ver. 17 contains an express prediction. So rich and complete were to

be the blessings to be enjoyed under the new dispensation, that the ark, with all the appendages of the temple-worship, would not be missed. *נָחַם* signifies not only *to visit, seek, search, look after*, but also *to miss, find wanting*, 1 Sam. xx. 6; xxv. 15; Is. xxxiv. 16; Jer. xxiii. 4. There was no longer to be any special holiness attaching to the temple: the whole city was to become the throne of Jehovah. As it had been the centre of the Hebrew theocracy, so it was now to be the point of attraction to the whole earth. Comp. Is. ii. 2—4; Zech. ii. 10, 11; xiv. 16—21. There the foundation of the Christian church was laid; and it continued to be the place of principal consideration till the final dispersion of the Jews.—The same language is used of the wickedness of the idolatrous Gentiles as that employed to describe the propensity of the Jews to the same evil, chap. vii. 24; ix. 14; xi. 8; xxiii. 17, and in other places. *נָחַם* or *נָחַם* is derived from *נָחַם*, *to be firm, hard*; hence the idea of *obstinacy*. The plural *נָחַם*, is of frequent recurrence in our prophet. See vii. 24; ix. 14; xi. 8; xiii. 10; xviii. 12; xxiii. 17. Compare also Deut. xxix. 18; Ps. lxxx. 13.

18. Nothing can be more express than this prediction of the return of the ten tribes, along with the rest of the nation, at the termination of the captivity in Babylon. Comp. Hos. ii. 2; Is. xi. 12, 13. *נָחַם*, not *to*, as rendered by some, but *with*, in the sense of accompanying. Comp. Exod. xxxv. 22; Job xxxviii. 32; Amos iii. 15.

19 But I said :

How shall I put thee among the children ?  
And give thee the pleasant land,  
The most beautiful inheritance of nations ?

Then I said :

Thou shalt call me, My Father !  
And shalt not turn away from me.

20 Yet as a wife faithlessly departeth from her husband,  
So have ye acted faithlessly towards me,  
O house of Israel ! saith Jehovah.

21 A voice was heard upon the high places,  
The weeping and supplications of the children of Israel,  
Because they had perverted their way,  
They had forgotten Jehovah their God.

22 Return, O apostate children !  
I will heal your apostasies :  
Behold ! we come unto thee,  
For thou, O Jehovah ! art our God.

19. Canaan was still the glorious patrimony, given by covenant to Abraham and his posterity. To this the Hebrews were to be restored ; but the question arose : How was this to be done ? How were those who had forsaken God for the worship of idols, to be received back into his family, fill an honourable rank among his children, and enjoy the forfeited inheritance ? The answer is given : they would acknowledge his paternal claims, render him the homage due to his name, and no more return to idolatry. *יְהוָה צְבִי צִבְאוֹת נִרְאָה*, lit. *the inheritance of the splendour of splendours of the nations, i.e. the most splendid of all countries*. Though *צִבְאוֹת* is elsewhere the construct of *צָבָא*, *hosts*, yet such acceptance of the word ill suits the present connexion ; and, besides, a superlative is required for the purpose of exalting the idea of the excellence of Canaan, which had just been spoken of as the pleasant land. For the application of *צְבִי* to that country, see Ezek. xx. 6, 15 ; Dan. xi. 16, 41, 45.—The *Keri* *הַצִּבְאוֹת* and *הַצִּבְאוֹת* are found in the text of upwards of thirty MSS., and in some of the early editions, and would seem to

deserve the preference, on the ground of *צְבִי* in the singular occurring immediately before. The LXX., Arab., and Syr., however, have read *הַצִּבְאוֹת*, the present textual reading.

20. There is an ellipsis of *הַצִּבְאוֹת* before *נִרְאָה*, as frequently in a protasis. Though the Israelites were to be received back into favour, they were not to forget the unfaithful part which they had acted. By *פֶּן*, *friend*, here, the idea of *husband* is conveyed.

21. Now follows, in beautiful harmony with the foregoing, the penitential confessions and supplications of the exiled Israelites. Instead of any more frequenting the high places for the purpose of offering sacrifice to idols, they repair to them in order publicly to acknowledge the iniquity with which they had been chargeable in forsaking the service of the true God.

22. Jehovah is here introduced, with admirable effect, as encouraging the exiles to return by the assurance that he would forgive their apostasy ; and they eagerly respond, from the middle of this verse to the end of the chapter, in tones of the deepest abasement—confessing

- 23 Surely in vain is the deliverance of Israel  
 Expected from the hills,  
 And the multitude of mountains;  
 Surely it is with Jehovah our God.
- 24 The object of shame hath consumed from our youth the gain  
 of our fathers,  
 Their sheep, their oxen, their sons and their daughters.
- 25 We lie down in our shame,  
 Our disgrace covereth us;  
 For we have sinned against Jehovah our God,  
 We and our fathers,  
 From our youth even to this day,  
 And have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah our God.

their folly and guilt in having preferred false deities to their own covenant God. *נָפַץ*, *to heal*, has, in several instances, the signification *to pardon*, or *forgive*. Comp. 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 20; Is. liii. 5; Hos. xiv. 4. For the textual reading, *נָפַץ*, upwards of sixty MSS. read *נָפַץ*, but the difference is of no consequence, the *נ* not unfrequently taking the place of *נ* in the orthography of this verb.

23. In *נָפַץ* there is an elision of the second *נ* of the root. On the authority of thirty-six MSS. and others in the margin, two early editions, the LXX., Arab., Hexaplar, Syr., the Peshito, Aq., Symm., and Vulg., *נָפַץ* should be pointed *נָפַץ* in the construct. The preposition *נָפַץ* is understood as repeated before it. The altars which were erected on high places to heathen gods abounded

to such a degree, that they were seen in every direction; but numerous as they were, the Israelites here acknowledge the utter vanity of looking to those deities for deliverance. Jehovah alone could afford them deliverance.

24. *נָפַץ*, *the shame*, i.e. collectively, the objects which put their worshippers to shame—the abominable idols. Comp. chap. xi. 13; Hos. ix. 10. In their fruitless service the Israelites had consumed not only their cattle, but even their children, whom they had offered in sacrifice to them.

25. So deep was their sense of shame that they were quite overwhelmed by it. The metaphor is taken from mourners, who, in token of excessive grief, lie down in the dust, and cover themselves with it.

## CHAPTER IV.

The two first verses of this chapter properly belong to the preceding, and conclude the discourse there addressed to the ten tribes. Conversion to Jehovah is re-asserted to be the condition on which a restoration could be realized; and, along with their conversion, would follow that of the pagan nations.

The prophet now turns back to those to whom he had originally been sent, and earnestly calls them to repentance, if they would escape the awful judgments of God, 3, 4. He then predicts the Babylonian invasion, with its appalling consequences, 5—9; interjects an expostulatory address of his own to Jehovah, 10;



further expatiates on the dreadful character of the calamity, 11—18; describes the painful feelings of the people at the prospect, 19—21; and, after adverting to their guilty folly, 22, proceeds, in language of great sublimity, to depict the devastations effected by the enemy, 23—26. Though the Jews were not to be utterly extirpated, yet the havoc should extend all over the country, and fall with special severity on the capital, 26—31.

1 If thou wouldst return, O Israel!

Return to me, saith Jehovah;

For if thou wilt remove thine abominations from before me,

Thou shalt not be a fugitive;

2 And if thou swear, "Jehovah liveth,"

In truth, in justice, and in righteousness,

Then shall the nations account themselves blessed in Him,

And in Him shall they glory.

3 For thus saith Jehovah,

To the men of Judah, and to Jerusalem:

Break up for yourselves the fallow ground,

And sow not among the thorns.

1. Dathe, Rosenmüller, De Wette, and Maurer connect *אֵל* with the first, and not with the second *אֱלֹהִים*, but in my judgment unnaturally. The introduction of *אֵל* so completely separates what goes before from what follows, as to render the construction which they adopt inadmissible. The meaning of the verse is plain: if the Israelites would return to their own land, they must first return by repentance and the abandonment of their idols to the pure worship of the God of their fathers. They should then be set free from their unsettled state of exile in the east. *אֵל*, to move, be moved, wander. Their condition resembled that of Cain, who became *אֵל*, a fugitive on the earth, Gen. iv. 12, 14.

2. The force of *אֵל* is manifestly carried forward to the beginning of this verse. To swear by Jehovah, means to bind oneself by a solemn profession to adhere to his worship and service. Comp. Deut. vi. 13; x. 20; Is. xix. 18; Amos viii. 14. *אֵל* prefixed to the three following nouns is strictly the Beth of accompaniment—indicating that the profession should not be alone, or merely that of

the lips, but should be accompanied with uprightness of heart, and the strictest rectitude of conduct. The *Vau* in *אֱלֹהִים* introduces the apodosis. The conversion of the pagan nations is here predicted as following that of Israel. That what has been effected by Christianity is here principally intended, I cannot doubt. A commencement of the completion took place in the numerous proselytes that were made to Judaism before the time of our Lord; but its grand accomplishment has taken, and still is taking place in the change effected by the Gospel among the nations of the earth.

3. The prophet addresses himself again to the Jews to whom he had been sent, and calls upon them, in an agricultural metaphor, to renounce their idolatrous practices, and thus be prepared to serve the Lord in sincerity and truth. Except they did so, it could no more be expected that their conduct should be acceptable to him, than a good harvest could be expected from a field that had not been cleared of thorns and noxious weeds. Matt. xiii. 7; Hos. x. 12.

- 4 Be ye circumcised for Jehovah,  
And remove the foreskins of your heart,  
Ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem ;  
Lest my fury come forth like fire,  
And burn, and there be none to quench it,  
On account of the wickedness of your doings.
- 5 Declare it in Judah,  
And cause it to be heard in Jerusalem ;  
Say ye : Blow the trumpet in the land,  
Cry aloud, and say :  
Assemble yourselves, and let us enter the fortified cities.
- 6 Raise the signal in Zion ;  
Flee for refuge,  
Stand not still ;  
For I am bringing calamity from the North,  
And great destruction.
- 7 The lion cometh up from his thicket,  
And the destroyer of the nations hath broken up ;  
He is come forth from his place,  
To make thy land desolate :  
Thy cities shall be laid waste,  
There shall be no inhabitant.

4. By a significant metaphor, taken from a well-known rite among the Jews, the prophet calls upon them to remove all their impure dispositions, and consecrate themselves wholly to Jehovah. That circumcision had this spiritual import, see besides the present passage, Deut. x. 16 ; xxx. 6 ; Rom. ii. 29 ; Col. ii. 11. The combination *רָעָה עֲשִׂיתָ*, *the wickedness of your doings*, is of extremely frequent recurrence in Jeremiah.

5. The inhabitants of Judea are apprised of the impending invasion, and summoned to take prompt and appropriate measures for safety. The opinion for which Hitzig so keenly contends, that the invasion here predicted was made by the Scythians, and not by the Chaldeans, does not appear to be sufficiently supported. The Vau before *רָעָה* has doubtless crept in from some transcribers' having borrowed it from the termination of the preceding word, *רָעָה*. It is omitted in fifty-five MSS., and in several editions,

the LXX., Syr., and Targ. *רָעָה*, *to fill*, is sometimes used adverbially in connexion with other verbs, to express the completeness with which anything is done. Here *רָעָה רָעָה*, *cry fully*, i.e. aloud : Vulg. *fortiter* ; LXX. *μεγα*.

6. Of the fortified cities of Judah, Jerusalem was the strongest. There a signal was to be erected as a central rallying-point to the inhabitants of the surrounding country. If it could be proved, that, on occasion of an invasion, a flag was displayed, *רָעָה*, To ZION, might be considered as the inscription upon it ; but the *רָעָה* is more probably merely that of locality, indicating rest in a place.

7. The Babylonian foe, announced in the previous verse as about to be introduced as the instrument of Jehovah for the punishment of the Jews, is here represented as already on his way to execute the Divine judgment. By the metaphor of a lion, he is set forth as having gone up from his lair—*רָעָה*, *his thicket*, i.e.

- 8 For this gird yourselves with sackcloth,  
Smite on your breast, and howl;  
For the hot anger of Jehovah  
Turneth not back from us.
- 9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah,  
That the heart of the king shall fail,  
And the heart of the princes;  
The priests shall be astonished,  
And the prophets shall be amazed.
- 10 Then I said :  
Ah Lord Jehovah !  
Surely thou hast greatly deceived this people,  
And Jerusalem, saying :  
Ye shall have peace,  
Whereas the sword reacheth to the life.
- 11 At that time it shall be said  
To this people, and to Jerusalem :

the intertwined branches of the trees of the forest. Root שִׁבְךָ, Arab. شَبَك, *to entwine, interweave*. By this his strongly fortified palace at Babylon is meant.

8, 9. Nothing was left for the Jews but to bewail their desperate condition. Their leading men, from the king downward, were all non-plussed. They could devise no means of relief.

10. Deeply affected by this state of things, the prophet cannot restrain his feelings, but gives them utterance in what, at first sight, appears to be a blasphemous charge against Jehovah. It is, however, only one of those strong modes of expression by which the Orientals are accustomed to ascribe to the Deity an agency by which the certainty of any event was secured, without his exerting any positive or direct influence on those concerned in it. He so arranges matters in his infinitely wise providence, that free agents shall be placed in circumstances in which, as the result of their own voluntary act, they shall effect that which he had determined should take place, however wicked or atrocious it may be. Thus it was in regard to Pharaoh : God is expressly said to have hardened his heart. Exod. iv. 21 ; vii.

3, 13 ; ix. 12. He is likewise expressly said to have delivered our Saviour up to death, Rom. viii. 32, and to send strong delusions to the dupes of the anti-christian apostasy ; yet it is as expressly declared, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, Exod. viii. 15, 32 ; ix. 34 ; that the Jews took and crucified and slew Christ with wicked hands, Acts ii. 23 ; and that those who were to be deluded were such as indulged feelings hostile to the truth, and so were self-prepared to become the dupes of error. In the language of Scripture the immediate cause is frequently omitted, and events are, without any scruple, attributed to the Great First Cause, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Eph. i. 11. In the present instance, Jeremiah ascribes to Jehovah what was the result of the agency of the prophets who prophesied falsely in his name, saying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace decreed by him ; yet they acted with all the freedom of moral agents, as did also the Jews, who allowed themselves to be deceived by them. "This people—and Jerusalem," *i. e.* the inhabitants of the land generally, and those of the metropolis in particular.

11, 12. The צָפוּר, *dry wind*, is the

- A dry wind of the high places in the desert,  
Towards the daughter of my people,  
Not to fan, nor to cleanse ;
- 12 A wind fuller than such shall come for me :  
Now will I also pronounce my judgments against them.
- 13 Behold ! he shall ascend as the clouds,  
And his chariots as the tempest ;  
His horses are swifter than eagles ;  
Wo to us, for we are destroyed !
- 14 Cleanse thy heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem !  
In order that thou mayest be delivered :  
How long wilt thou harbour vain projects within thee ?
- 15 For a voice announceth from Dan,  
And publisheth trouble from Mount Ephraim.
- 16 Communicate it to the nations,  
Behold ! publish respecting Jerusalem ;  
Besiegers are coming from a distant country,  
And they shall give forth their voice against the cities of  
Judah.

same as the *מזרח*, *east wind*, or *Simoom*, so frequently mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, which modern travellers describe as terrific in its phenomena, and most destructive as to its effects. It generally blows from the south-east across the dry sandy deserts to the east of Palestine. The ranges of bare hills by which they are occasionally intersected are here called *מזרח*, *naked eminences*, on which no trees were found. Such a wind is very different from those ordinary winds which might be employed for fanning the grain, or clearing the floor after the process of fanning had ceased. *הנה*, *these*, seems most naturally to refer to such winds as had just been mentioned, which were useful and not destructive. *ל*, *for me*, as my instrument for the execution of my purpose. Under this metaphor of the Simoom, the Babylonian army is intended, which was to sweep with resistless force across the land of Judea. Comp. Is. xxvii. 8. The pronominal reference in *אני*, *with them*, is the people of the Jews, ver. 11. Comp. i. 16.

13. Still continuing the metaphor, the

prophet compares the terrible appearance of the hostile army to the clouds of sand and dust which accompany the Simoom, and after performing rapid gyrations, ascend and cover the whole heavens ; and to the hurricane, which carries all before it. With greater rapidity also than the flight of the eagle, should the cavalry advance. Comp. Hab. i. 8. Well might the inhabitants exclaim, that they were undone.

14. There was only one means of deliverance left for the Jews—a timely and sincere repentance. The vain projects appear to mean the scheming by which the Jews still attempted to enlist the Egyptians on their side. *הנה* is in Hiphil. Thus Vatablus, C. B. Michaelis, Schnurrer, Winer, Gesenius, De Wette.

15. A messenger arrives from the northern frontier of the Holy Land, announcing the approach of the enemy.

16, 17. The foreign nations in the vicinity are summoned to appear as witnesses of the punishment which Jehovah was about to inflict upon his rebellious people. The voice referred to, is the war-shout raised by armies when about

- 17 As the keepers of a field,  
They shall be against her round about ;  
For she hath rebelled against me,  
Saith Jchovah.
- 18 Thy way, and thy doings  
Have procured these things to thee ;  
This is thy wickedness ;  
Surely it is bitter,  
Surely it reacheth to thy heart.
- 19 My bowels, my bowels !  
I am pained at the walls of my heart ;  
My heart moaneth ; I cannot be silent ;  
For thou hast heard, O my soul ! the sound of the trumpet,  
The shout of the battle.
- 20 Breach upon breach is announced,  
Surely the whole land is destroyed ;  
My tents are suddenly destroyed,  
My tent-curtains in a moment.
- 21 How long shall I see the signal,  
And hear the sound of the trumpet ?

to give battle. The metaphor, ver. 17, is taken from those who watch fields for the purpose of frightening away the wild beasts.

18. A direct application of the subject to the Jews, tracing the calamity, awful as it was, to its sole cause,—the wicked conduct of the nation. This, like a deadly wound, festered its very core. For קָרַח, three MSS. and all the ancient versions read קָרַח.

19—21. Most interpreters consider these words to be the language of the prophet, but they may more appropriately be regarded as those of the Jewish state personified, which is introduced as experiencing the most acute anguish on receiving the painful intelligence of the near approach of the enemy. Not only does the mention of tents and tent-curtains suggest the idea of more than one person, but the comparison of the language here employed with that found in the strictly parallel passage chap. x. 19, 20, where unquestionably the Jewish state is personified, leads to the same conclusion.

The repetition כִּי כִי, *my bowels ! my bowels !* is very pathetic, and speaks to the feelings of all who have ever experienced the acute pain to which reference is made. אֲחֻזָּה is barbarously anomalous. If spelt according as it is pointed, the verb must be referred to the root חָזַק, to expect, wait, &c., than which nothing would be more unsuitable in this connexion. The MSS. and editions exhibit considerable variety of reading, some having אֲחֻזָּה, some אֲחֻזָּה, and upwards of forty MSS. אֲחֻזָּה. Both the Keri and the Chethib exhibit a like variety. The choice of readings lies between אֲחֻזָּה and אֲחֻזָּה; the former the Kal, and the latter the Hiphil of חָזַק, to writhe with pain. If the latter be preferred, it must be taken intransitively: *I writhe*, or *am in pain*.—קִירוֹ הַלֵּב, *the walls of the heart*, has been taken by our translators as a Hebrew idiom, which they have accordingly changed into *the very heart*. In works on medical science, however, the phrase is of common occurrence. Thus, in Smith's *Philosophy of Health*: "From the tendinous matter

- 22 Surely my people are foolish ;  
 They know me not ;  
 They are sottish children,  
 They are undiscerning :  
 They are wise to do evil,  
 But to do good they know not.
- 23 I saw the land,  
 And behold ! it was waste and empty ;  
 And the heavens, and they had no light.
- 24 I saw the mountains,  
 And behold ! they trembled,  
 And all the hills shook vehemently.
- 25 I saw, and behold ! there was no man,  
 And all the birds of the air had fled.
- 26 I saw, and behold ! the fruitful land had been turned into the  
 desert ;  
 And all its cities were broken down,  
 Before Jehovah, before the fury of his anger.
- 27 For thus saith Jehovah :  
 The whole land shall become desolate ;  
 Yet I will not effect an utter destruction.

just indicated most of the fibres that constitute the muscular walls of the heart take their origin." — From the sound of the war-trumpet, the prophet proceeds to the battle-shout, then to the breaches made by the enemy, next to the universal havoc made throughout the country, and the gradation terminates with the destruction of the shepherds' tents, for which an exemption might have been expected. Judah, in her perplexity, asks : How long this state of things was to continue ? For <sup>לִפְנֵי</sup> <sup>פָּנֶיךָ</sup>, a number of MSS. and editions read <sup>לִפְנֵי</sup> <sup>פָּנֶיךָ</sup>.

22. The repetitious clauses in this verse are designed to give greater force to the sentiment conveyed in it.

23—26. Nothing can exceed the bold and striking character of the poetical images here employed to set forth the completeness of the desolation with which Palestine was to be visited. The use of <sup>לִפְנֵי</sup> <sup>פָּנֶיךָ</sup> carries the mind at once back to Gen. i 2, in which the same words are employed to depict the pri-

meval chaos. Comp. Is. xxxiv. 11.—<sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup>, *hithkalkālū*, is beautifully expressive of the violent agitations of the mountains during an earthquake. Comp.

the Eth. <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup>: Arab. <sup>وَالْجِبَالُ</sup> <sup>تَتَزَلْزَلُ</sup>,  
*commovit rem.* <sup>وَالْجِبَالُ</sup> <sup>تَتَزَلْزَلُ</sup>, *motus vehementior.*

All is represented as one complete scene of solitude and desolation, no vestige of the human or of the feathered creation is to be seen. City and field are alike laid waste. The fourfold repetition of <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup>, *I saw, and behold !* greatly enhances the interest of the picture. For <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup> comp. chap. ii. 7. Though we should expect that, grammatically, there would be no article before <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup>, yet it is here prefixed in order more strikingly to exhibit the contrast with <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> <sup>הַהָרִים</sup>, *the desert*, i.e. the great desert.

27. In the midst of wrath God still remembers mercy. Comp. v. 10.

- 28 On this account the land shall mourn,  
And the heavens above shall be black ;  
Because I have spoken it, I have purposed it,  
And will not repent, nor draw back from it.
- 29 At the noise of the horsemen and the archers  
Every city shall flee ;  
They shall go into the thickets,  
And climb the rocks :  
Every city shall be abandoned,  
And not a man shall dwell in them.
- 30 And thou, O destroyed one ! what wilt thou do ?  
Though thou clothest thyself with scarlet,  
Though thou adornest thyself with ornaments of gold,  
Though thou rendest thine eyes with paint,  
In vain shalt thou beautify thyself ;  
Thy lovers shall despise thee,  
They shall seek thy life.
- 31 Surely I have heard a cry like that of a woman in travail,  
The utterance of anguish, like that of her who bears for the  
first time ;  
The cry of the daughter of Zion :  
She panteth, she spreadeth forth her hands :

28. *על־כֵּן*, *on this account*, refers to the former half of the preceding verse. The whole of nature is clad in gloom at the awful catastrophe.

29—31. The city here meant is thought by some to be Jerusalem; to which the inhabitants of the country had been summoned to flee for safety, but now that she was herself threatened by the invading foe, they are represented as leaving her again in their perplexity, and betaking themselves to the recesses of the forests and mountains.—*בְּלִדְעֵי*, may, even with the article, be taken distributively, as will be seen on consulting Exod. i. 22. The use of *בָּנָהּ*, *in them*, requires this construction.—Having described the sad plight to which the cities of Judah would be reduced, the prophet turns abruptly to Jerusalem, ver. 30, upon which he concentrates the whole force of his discourse, preparatory to his description of her awful wickedness

at the beginning of the following chapter. That we should here have *שָׁרִי* in the masculine, instead of *שָׂרִי*, to agree with *אִמִּי*, and the uniformity with respect to the feminine which follows, may be accounted for on the principle that *עַם*, *people*, denoting the inhabitants, is understood.—*לְרַע עֵינֶיךָ בְּפָדִי*, *to rend the eyes with paint*, referring to the custom of eastern females, who, in order to make their eyes look large, which is deemed essential to their beauty, employ stibium or antimony, which they lay inside the eyelids with a pencil. By laying on too much they injure them, and make them look as if rent. Jerusalem is ironically represented as doing this in her eagerness to render herself beautiful, in order to attract the favour of the Egyptians, and so secure their aid against the Babylonians. The earliest instance which we have of this custom is that of Jezebel, 2 Kings xi. 30. In the anguish

Alas ! now for me !

For my soul fainteth because of murderers.

occasioned by the attack of the enemy, her inhabitants cry out like a female parturient for the first time, and in hard labour. There is peculiar beauty in

suppressing the name of the person in trouble until that trouble had been fully described.

## CHAPTER V.

Depravity had become so universal in Jerusalem, that no class was free from its infection. Notwithstanding all the means employed for their reformation, the inhabitants were only the more hardened ; and whatever profession of religion they made was altogether hypocritical, 1—5. Such wickedness loudly called for the infliction of condign punishment, 6—9. The prophet summons the Babylonians to proceed to inflict this punishment, which the Jews would not admit to be imminent, 10—13. An announcement is then made of its certainty, and a description given of the enemy, and the devastation which he should effect, 14—18. This is followed by an exhibition of the character of the people under various aspects of aggravated guilt, mingled with pointed appeals in reference to the calamity that was coming upon them, 19—31.

- 1 RUN to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,  
And look now about, and ascertain, and search in her open  
places,  
Whether ye can find a man,  
Whether there be any one doing right, or seeking truth,  
And I will pardon her.

1. It being beyond dispute, that there did live at the time of the prophet good men at Jerusalem, such as Josiah, Baruch, and Zephaniah, the universality of the language here employed has been endeavoured to be accounted for, either by supposing magistrates to be meant, or that it is to be confined to those who were to be found in the localities specified—the pious having been obliged to live in retirement. But neither of these hypotheses meets the case. It seems more natural to conclude, that nothing else is intended, than to set forth the general corruption of manners that pre-

vailed. This corruption was so extensive, that the few exceptions which might exist were not to be taken into the account. Strictly speaking, the language is hyperbolical ; just as in Psalm xiv. we find a description of general corruption, expressed in the most unlimited terms, while at the same time a generation of the righteous—the people of God—is recognised, ver. 4, 5. If we may suppose a reference to Gen. xviii. 32, the conclusion is, that matters were worse in Jerusalem than in Sodom, in which, how gross soever was the immorality, there is no proof that idolatry was practised.



- 2 And though they may say: "Jehovah liveth!"  
They, nevertheless, swear falsely.
- 3 O Jehovah! are not thine eyes toward the truth?  
Thou hast smitten them, but they have not been in pain;  
Thou hast consumed them,  
But they have refused to be corrected;  
They have made their faces harder than a rock,  
They have refused to return.
- 4 Then I said:  
Surely these are the poor;  
They are foolish,  
For they know not the way of Jehovah,  
The judgment of their God.
- 5 I will betake me to the great,  
And will speak to them;  
For they must know the way of Jehovah,  
The judgment of their God:  
But these have altogether broken the yoke,  
They have burst asunder the bonds.
- 6 Wherefore a lion from the forest shall slay them,  
An evening wolf shall destroy them;  
A leopard shall lie in wait about their cities;  
Every one who goeth out of them shall be torn in pieces:  
Because their rebellions are numerous,  
Their apostasies are increased.

2. Swearing is to be understood here, not in the sense of taking a judicial oath, but in that of professing the true worship of Jehovah. See on chap. iv. 2. Whatever profession of the true religion was made on occasion of Josiah's removal of the objects of idolatrous adoration, it was purely hypocritical.

3. What treatment had the Jews to expect from Jehovah, as *אל אמתה*, the *God of truth*, Deut. xxxii. 4, whose eyes are always intent upon uprightness, and who requires it in all his worshippers? To Him in this character the prophet appeals, and proceeds to assert that all the chastisements with which he had visited them, with a view to reform them, had only left them more unfeeling and obstinate than before.

4, 5. In order to give still greater prominence to the universality of the evil, the prophet here supposes the case, that it could only exist among the mass of the uneducated vulgar, and then goes on to express his hope, that he would find things in a very different state among those constituting the higher ranks of society, who had enjoyed superior advantages. But there he found nothing but the most lawless profligacy. For *אִם*, see on chap. i. 16.

6. Three of the fiercest of the wild animals are selected as metaphors, under which to represent the formidable character of the Babylonians—the lion as the strongest, the wolf as the most ravenous, and the leopard as the swiftest of such animals. *לִפְּדוּם* is rendered by

- 7 How can I pardon thee for this?  
 Thy children have forsaken me,  
 And have sworn by objects that are not God ;  
 Though I supplied them abundantly,  
 Yet they committed adultery,  
 And gathered themselves in the harlot's house.
- 8 Fed stallions, rising early,  
 They neighed, each after the wife of his neighbour.
- 9 Should I not punish for these things? saith Jehovah ;  
 And should not my soul avenge itself on such a nation as this?

some, a *wolf of the deserts* ; by others, a *wolf of the evenings*. To the latter interpretation it has been objected, that though לְבַיַּיִם *wolves of the evening*, occurs in application to the same subject, Hab. i. 8, and likewise in application to rapacious judges, Zeph. iii. 3, yet the word for evening is in the singular, and not in the plural as here ; but there is little or no force in the objection. What has been thought to give support to the former construction of the phrase is the local reference in בְּיַעַר, *from the forest*, immediately preceding. On the whole I am inclined to adopt the temporal signification of the term, which is that exhibited by the Vulg., Targ., Syr., Vatablus, Grotius, Dathe, and Maurer.

7—9. Jehovah now appeals to the Jews, whether it was possible for him, consistently with his holy and righteous character, to forbear inflicting punishment, on account of such awfully wicked conduct as that in which they indulged. For נִשְׁבַּע read, with the Keri, נִשְׁבַּע. Instead of the textual reading אֲנִי נִשְׁבַּע, *I made them swear*, i.e. I caused them to make a solemn profession of allegiance to me, thirty-three of De Rossi's MSS. and fourteen printed editions, of both of which are some of the best—the LXX., Arab., Syr., Targ., and Vulg. read נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי, while many MSS., and the Soncino and Brixian editions read in full, אֲנִי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי, *though I fed them to the full*, i.e. I supplied them abundantly with all needful good. The latter reading is approved by Raschi, Kimchi, Michaelis, Dathe, Dahler, Rosenmüller, Ewald, and Umbreit ; but Scholz, Maurer, and Hitzig prefer the former, and consider the reference to be to the

pledge which the nation took at Sinai. The frequency with which the ungrateful conduct of the Jews is contrasted in our prophet with the bountifulness of their covenant God, favours the amended reading. So far were they from manifesting a desire to offer him the returns of devoted obedience, that they assembled in crowds in idolatrous temples, encouraging one another in the service of false gods. While "the harlot's house" is to be taken metaphorically as denoting an idolatrous temple, it must not be forgotten that prostitution formed part of the worship.

8. The avidity with which they pursued the worship of false gods is here represented under a most expressive metaphor. מְשִׁיבִים or מְשִׁיבִים the Keri prescribes should be read מְשִׁיבִים, according to Schultens, *ponderibus*, i.e. *testibus instructi*, from מָשָׁה, *to be heavy* ; but this root is altogether suppositious ; and the textual reading—the Hophal Participle of נָי, *to nourish, feed*, &c., affords a sense quite as appropriate.—מִשְׁפָּחִים Michaelis points מִשְׁפָּחִים, and renders *trahentes genitalia*, in which he follows Jerome, who gives *ἐλκοντες* as the rendering of the Greek versions. Simonis proposed that מִשְׁפָּחִים, Eth. **ሰፍሶ**: *erravit*, should be regarded as the root, of which מִשְׁפָּחִים would be the Hiphil Participle. This derivation, though approved by Rosenmüller, De Wette, Maurer and Umbreit, is rejected by Gesenius, who abides by the old interpretation of the Hebrew school: *mane surgens, summo studio aliquid fecit*, and takes the word to be put in the singular for the plural מִשְׁפָּחִים. Hitzig calls this an impossible syncope.

- 10 Scale her walls, and destroy,  
But effect not an utter destruction ;  
Remove her tendrils,  
For they are not Jehovah's.
- 11 Surely they have acted very faithlessly towards me,  
Both the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, saith  
Jehovah.
- 12 They have denied Jehovah,  
They have said : " He is not ;  
Therefore calamity shall not overtake us,  
Neither shall we behold the sword or famine." "
- 13 And " the prophets are become wind,  
And there is no word in them :  
Thus shall it be done to themselves." "
- 14 Wherefore thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts :  
Because ye speak this word,  
Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire,  
And this people wood, and it shall devour them.

Ewald proposes the Arab. شيق, *desiderio flagrans*, and points to שָׁיִק, which he would make equivalent to שָׁחַח, and compares the Hebrew שָׁחַח, *desire, longing*. I see no necessity for departing from Hebrew usage, according to which this participial form is used adverbially to express the doing of anything early. The anomaly may be regarded as an instance of neglected number.

10. By the abrupt introduction of an apostrophe, the Babylonians are ordered to take Jerusalem, but at the same time to temper the judgment with mercy. Comp. iv. 27. Though the Jewish people were not to be utterly destroyed, yet the notables were to be removed to Babylon. The metaphor is that of a vineyard, surrounded by walls, and well stocked with vines. שָׁחַח from שָׁחַח, which is equivalent to שָׁחַח, *a wall*—an interpretation which quite satisfies the claims of the context, and is that given in all the ancient versions, so that there is no necessity to introduce, with Hitzig, the *palm-tree*, or, with Ewald, the *blossoms of the vine*. While the tendrils were to be removed, the stems were to remain. Comp. Is. vi. 13.

12. Transferring their worship to idols the Hebrews had practically denied the existence of the true God. They went, at all events, to the length of disavowing their belief in his holy character as the punisher of sin, and flattered themselves with the idea that they should be exempt from calamity.

13. The continuation of the unbelieving language of the Jews. The הָ in שָׁחַח, Maurer and Hitzig take to be employed instead of the relative הָ, and render, *he who speaketh*; but it seems better to consider שָׁחַח as equivalent to שָׁחַח, and to be used, as in Hos. i. 2, of a divine communication. The impious Jews maintained that the prophets had received no such message to deliver as that which involved their punishment, but that all their threatenings were the mere invention of their own brain. They further asserted, that, as announcers of falsehood, they deserved to have their predictions accomplished in themselves.

14. To express the penetrating energy of the Divine word, our prophet compares it to fire, chap. xxiii. 29; but here the metaphor is employed to denote the severe denunciations of judgment which the prophet was commissioned to deliver,

- 15 Behold, I am bringing against you a nation from afar,  
 O house of Israel! saith Jehovah;  
 A nation that is mighty,  
 A nation that is ancient,  
 A nation whose language thou shalt not understand,  
 Neither shalt thou distinguish what it shall speak.
- 16 Their quiver is like an open sepulchre,  
 All of them are heroes.
- 17 They shall eat up thy harvest and thy bread,  
 Which thy sons and thy daughters should eat;  
 They shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds,  
 They shall eat up thy vines and thy fig-trees;  
 They shall impoverish thy fortified cities,  
 Wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.
- 18 Yct, even in those days, saith Jehovah,  
 I will not make an end of you.
- 19 And it shall come to pass when ye shall say:  
 Why doeth Jehovah our God all these things to us?  
 Then thou shalt say to them:  
 As ye have forsaken me,

the execution of which would resemble the devouring action of that element.

15, 16. By the *house of Israel* in this verse are not meant the ten tribes then in exile, but the Jews of the Davidic kingdom. The description of the Babylonians is terse and forcible. The four-fold occurrence of *goy*, *nation*, greatly adds to its force. *goy* properly signifies *perennial*, *constant*, and is used of streams which never dry up. The term is also used to describe whatever is firm or strong, and is here obviously employed in this acceptation. The antiquity ascribed to the invaders has special respect to the Chaldeans, a nation originally inhabiting the Carduchian mountains and the northern parts of Mesopotamia, but who had immigrated into the Babylonian territory, where they had a settlement allotted them; and being, like all mountaineers, distinguished for their bravery, doubtless composed the most formidable part of the invading army. See my comment on Isaiah xxiii. 13. From its being affirmed that the Jews would not

understand the language of this people, it follows that after they left their original abodes, they must have retained their native tongue, which was, in all probability, the mother of the present Kurdish—a language totally different from any of Semitic origin, but showing much affinity with the ancient Persian.—The comparison of their quivers to an open grave was designed to convey the notion of the deadly effect of the arrows which they contained.

17. Before *goy* supply *goyim*. The verb being thrice used in the singular, shows that as here employed in the plural it is to be referred not to the Chaldeans, but to the sons and daughters of the Jews.

18. The concluding words of this verse are not to be understood of God's not completing his judgments by the first invasion of the land, as Grotius interprets, but of his merciful determination not to exterminate the Jews as a people. Comp. chap. iv. 27; v. 10.

19. By a just retribution, the Jews, who had given themselves up to the

- And served strange gods in your own land,  
 So shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not your's.
- 20 Declare this in the house of Jacob,  
 And publish it in Judah, saying :
- 21 Hear now this, O people foolish and without understanding !  
 Who have eyes, but see not ;  
 Who have ears, but hear not.
- 22 Will ye not fear me ? saith Jehovah ;  
 Will ye not tremble at my presence ?  
 Who have placed the sand for a boundary to the sea,  
 By a perpetual law, that it may not pass it ;  
 Yea though the waves toss themselves, they cannot prevail ;  
 Though they roar, yet they cannot pass it.
- 23 But this people hath a revolting and rebellious heart,  
 They have revolted, and are gone.
- 24 Neither say they in their heart :  
 Let us now fear Jehovah our God,  
 Who giveth rain, both the former and the latter in its season,  
 Who secureth to us the appointed weeks of harvest.
- 25 Your iniquities have turned away these things,  
 And your sins have withholden good from you.

worship of foreign idols in their own country, should now be reduced to slavery by foreign masters in a strange land.

21. Comp. for this description of the moral obtuseness of the Jews in the time of the prophet, Deut. xxix. 4. They had the power of perception, but they would not use it. Nevertheless they were held responsible, and are called to the exercise of it.

22. A sublime exhibition of the Divine character, as the omnipotent Author of nature, who, by the laws which he hath ordained, renders the feeble beach, consisting only of incoherent particles of sand, a sufficient barrier to arrest at once the mountainous billows of the ocean. Such a Being was indeed to be feared ; and if the Jews had not become utterly insensate, they never could have exchanged his service for that of inanimate and powerless idols.

23, 24. For *סור* and *סור*, comp. *סור* *סור*, vi. 28, and *סור* *סור*, Hos. iv. 16.

The Jews were blind to the character of Jehovah, not only as the Author of nature, but also as the God of providence, to whose bountifulness they were indebted for the fruitful seasons which they had enjoyed. It argues the greatest insensibility of heart to be unmoved alike by the power and the goodness of God.—*יָרֵד*, the former rain, falls from the middle of October till the beginning of December, and, reviving the parched and thirsty soil, prepares it for the seed : *יִשְׁקֶה*, the latter, or spring rain, which falls in Palestine before the harvest, in the months of March and April, and is essential to the maturity of the crops.—The harvest weeks were the seven weeks which intervened between the Passover and Pentecost, dating from the 16th day of Nisan. Deut. xvi. 9. To render *שָׁבָע*, oaths, as Ewald and Umbreit do in this place, is unwarranted by Hebrew usage.

25. There had been an interruption of fruitful seasons, which the prophet

- 26 For wicked men are found among my people,  
They each lie in wait, like the crouching of fowlers,  
They set a trap, they catch men.
- 27 As a cage full of birds,  
So are their houses full of deceit;  
Therefore they are become great and rich.
- 28 They are fat, they shine,  
They even surpass in matters of wickedness;  
They judge not the cause,  
The cause of the orphan, yet they prosper;  
They defend not the right of the needy.
- 29 Should I not punish for these things? saith Jehovah;  
Should not my soul avenge itself on such a nation as this?
- 30 An astounding and horrible thing is done in the land;  
31 The prophets prophesy falsely,  
And the priests rule under their guidance;  
And my people love to have it so;  
But what will ye do in the end thereof?

ascribes to the national guilt of the Jews.

26—28. However wickedly they might act, the Jews were still the people of God, in so far as his propriety in them was concerned. It was impossible that he should renounce his claims on their obedience. In metaphors taken from bird-catchers, the prophet describes the cunning of the more abandoned part of the nation, and the great wealth which they had unjustly acquired. *אֶרֶץ* is here used of the great caution and circumspection with which fowlers proceed when setting their snares, in order to secure their prey. *אֶרֶץ* is the infinitive of *אָרַץ*, to stoop, bend oneself down. *מַשְׁחִיתִי* properly means *destroyer* or *destruction*—here the means or instrument of destruction—the snare or trap.—*אֶרֶץ*, a basket, or cage, so called because of its wicker-work. See on Amos viii. 1. By the houses being full of deceit, is meant, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect, that they had heaped up treasures acquired by fraud. Notwithstanding their superlative wickedness, and their total neglect of the destitute, rolling as they did in wealth, they were, in the

providence of God, permitted to prosper, that their fall might be the more conspicuous. Comp. Ps. lxxiii. 18—20; xcii. 7.

29. A repetition of the pointed interrogations put in ver. 9.

31. Instead of exerting their influence in order to curb the people in their wicked courses, the prophets delivered false messages by which they were flattered, and rendered secure; and the priests were encouraged by these lying teachers, because by their means their influence over the deluded multitude was maintained. The prophets were the guides or directors of the priests. The credulous confidence of the ignorant has in all ages been at the command of an interested priesthood. *בְּיָדָם*, literally *at their hand*, i.e. by their guidance. Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 3; Ezra iii. 10. It appears clear from various parts of the Old Testament, that a great number of persons pretending to prophesy arose among the Hebrews, by whom the exertions of the true prophets were greatly counteracted, and the ruin of the nation accelerated. *וְ* at the termination of *אֶרֶץ* is used as a neuter, and refers to the state of things just described.

## CHAPTER VI.

Further representations of the Babylonian invasion, and the siege of Jerusalem, 1—6; the procuring cause of the calamity and another admonitory warning follow, 6—9; the prophet next expatiates on the awful corruption of the Jewish state, and the guilt which had been contracted by rejecting the messages of Jehovah, and listening to the flattering predictions of the false prophets, 10—15; then gives special point to the obstinacy of the people, and summons the nations to witness the punishment inflicted on them, 16—19; their hypocritical offerings are then denounced, 20; the tremendous character of the Babylonians is again exhibited, 21—26; and the chapter closes with a description of the irreclaimableness of the Jews, notwithstanding all the means that had been tried with them, 27—30.

- 1 FLEE for refuge, O ye sons of Benjamin !  
Out of the midst of Jerusalem ;  
Blow ye the trumpet in Tekoa ;  
Raise the signal at Beth-haccarem :  
For calamity impendeth from the north,  
And great destruction.
- 2 I will destroy the daughter of Zion,  
The beautiful and delicate one.

1. Jerusalem was situated in the tribe of Benjamin, which was here separated from that of Judah by the Valley of Hinnom. Though the city was inhabited partly by those belonging to the latter tribe, and partly by Benjaminites, yet these are specially addressed, owing, as Raschi suggested, and as many of the moderns approve, to their being more especially the prophet's own countrymen. From the natural strength of its position, and the resources of defence which it contained, it was natural that the inhabitants of the surrounding country should betake themselves to the capital for safety. Those who had so done are now exhorted to make their escape from it ere it was invested by the enemy, by whom it would be taken and destroyed. As the hostile army approached from the north, the only direction in which they could flee was towards the south, in which the two towns lay which are here specified. The former, *Tekoa*, the birth-place of the prophet Amos, lay on an elevated hill, about twelve miles due

south from Jerusalem. Its ruins, covering four or five acres, are described by Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. p. 182. According to Jerome, *Beth-haccarem* was situated between Tekoa and the capital. Ewald, inconsistently with his own practice, changes the proper Hebrew names of these two towns into terms expressive of their etymological significations. For Tekoa he gives *Stossheim*, and for Beth-haccarem, *Weinbergshause*. He was doubtless induced to adopt the former rendering in order to give in German the force of the paronomasia: *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע בְּתֵל־חַצְצֵרִים בְּשֹׁמְרֵי הַמָּוֶלֶת*, in *Stossheim* *stosst* in die *Posaune*.—*וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע בְּתֵל־חַצְצֵרִים*, (properly an *elevation*, from *וָרָאָה*, to *raise*, equivalent to *וָרָאָה*, a *signal*;) is very probably employed here to denote a signal made by kindling a fire on the tops of mountains, or other elevations, in order to warn the inhabitants of a country of the approach of an enemy. In the Talmud the term is used of the fires which the Jews kindled as signals at the time of the new moon.

2. Though *וָרָאָה* signifies in Kal *to be*

- 3 The shepherds and their flocks shall come to her,  
They shall pitch their tents around her ;  
They shall feed, each in his place.
- 4 Prepare war against her ;  
Arise, and let us go up at noon ;  
Alas ! for us, for the day declines,  
For the shadows of evening are lengthened.
- 5 Arise, and let us go up by night,  
And let us destroy her palaces.
- 6 For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :  
Cut down trees,  
And throw up a mound against Jerusalem :  
This is the city to be altogether punished ;  
Oppression is in the midst of her.
- 7 As a well causeth its water to flow,  
So she causeth her wickedness to flow ;

like, yet it never has in that conjugation, but only in Piel, the signification of *likening*, or *comparing*. It must, therefore, be taken in the acceptance of *destroying*, reducing any thing to silence by making an end of it. הָנִיחַ הַמִּצְנֵה are in the vocative, and הַמִּצְנֵה, which is in apposition with them, is used instead of the pronoun הָנִיחַ.

3. The shepherds and their flocks are used metaphorically for the Babylonian princes and their armies. Comp. chap. xlix. 20 ; l. 45. יָד, *hand*, is employed, as here, to denote *place*. Numb. ii. 17 ; Deut. xxiii. 13.

4, 5. For the phrase קָדַשׁ מִלְחָמָה, *to sanctify war*, see on Is. xiii. 3. The hostile army are here introduced as encouraging one another to the attack on Jerusalem. So eager are they, that they even propose that it should be made at noon, notwithstanding the heat of the sun. The onset being made, they mourn the approaching shades of night, which threaten to suspend their hostile operations, but still resolve to renew the attack at night. The complaint uttered is not that of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but of the invaders, regretting that the daylight was too short for their destructive warfare.

6. צִדָּה, *her tree or trees*, which some of

De Rossi's MSS. read, and which is countenanced by the LXX., Arab., and both the Syr. versions, affords no proper sense. The trees were to be employed in constructing mounds and other works requisite for the siege. Agger autem ex terra lignisque attollitur contra murum. VEGET. de Re Militar. iv. 15. מִצְדָּה is used collectively for מִצְדִּים.—מִצְדָּה, *to pour out* a mound, has reference to the emptying of the baskets of earth which was brought to make the mound.—Jerusalem is δεικνυκώς pointed out as the city to be captured, in punishment of her crimes, the awful extent of which is set forth in this and the following verse. הָנִיחַ הַמִּצְנֵה are to be joined in construction, and not separated as they are by the Zakephkaton. לָלֵךְ, which is masculine, thus becomes the nominative to הָנִיחַ.

7. בִּיר, or, as it is given in the Keri, בִּיר, is the same as בִּירָה, a well dug in the ground, from which water springs, as distinguished from מְצוּנָה, a natural spring or fountain. Comp. the Arab. بئر, *puteus*.

הָנִיחַ, literally, *to cause to dig*, from הָנִיחַ, *to dig*, but used here metonymically for the effect of digging—the causing of the water to flow. Historical proofs of the dreadful state of things described by the prophet are found, 2 Kings xxi. 16, 24.



Violence and spoil are heard in her,  
Pains and wounds are continually before me.

8 Be instructed, O Jerusalem !

Lest my soul should be torn away from thee ;  
Lest I make thee desolate,  
A land not inhabited.

9 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :

They shall thoroughly glean, as a vine, the remnant of Israel ;  
Turn thy hand again, like a grape-gatherer, into the  
baskets.

10 To whom shall I speak,

And give warning, that they may hear ?

Behold ! their ear is uncircumcised,

So that they cannot hearken ;

Behold ! the word of Jehovah is to them a reproach,

They take no delight in it.

11 Therefore I am full of the fury of Jehovah,

I am weary of containing it ;

I will pour it upon the children without,

And upon the assembly of the youths together ;

Surely both the husband and the wife shall be taken,

The aged with him that is full of days.

That the speaker at the close of the verse is Jehovah is evident from what immediately follows, ver. 8.

8.  $\text{פָּנֵי}$  is a strong term, denoting the effort required in separating one thing from another. It is expressive in this place of the unwillingness of Jehovah to inflict punishment upon Jerusalem. He was attached to it, as the place which he had chosen to put his name there, and nothing but the extreme wickedness of its inhabitants could have moved him to withdraw his affection from it. We have here another of those tender exhortations which are so frequently mingled with threatenings of punishment.

9. The Jews are represented under the metaphor of a vine, and their enemies as the vintagers. As the latter cease not to return with their baskets while any grapes remain to be reaped, so the Babylonians were repeatedly to come and carry away the inhabitants into cap-

tivity. See 2 Kings xxiv. 14; xxv. 11; Jer. lii. 28—30.  $\text{סִלְבִּים}$ , *wicker-baskets*, the same as  $\text{סִלִּים}$ , from  $\text{סָלַל}$ , *to move to and fro*, like twigs or branches, hence the twigs of which baskets are made.

10. The prophet represents the hearts of the people as closed with a foreskin, an image which must possess much force of meaning to a Jew, and is not unfrequent in Scripture, Lev. xxvi. 41; Ezek. xlv. 7; Acts vii. 51. The prophet found no entrance for the divine message: it was not only neglected, but treated with contempt by all.

11. Such, however, was the strong impulse to denounce the judgments of God of which Jeremiah was conscious, that he found it impossible any longer to restrain his feelings, and therefore calls upon himself in a state of impassioned emotion, to pour them forth upon all without distinction of age or sex.

- 12 And their houses shall be transferred to others,  
 Their fields and wives together ;  
 For I will stretch out my hand  
 Upon the inhabitants of the land,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 13 For from the least of them to the greatest of them,  
 They are all greedy of gain ;  
 And from the prophet to the priest,  
 They all act falsely.
- 14 For they heal the breach of the daughter of my people slightly,  
 Saying : Peace, peace ;  
 When there is no peace.
- 15 They ought to have been ashamed, because they have committed an abomination ;  
 But they are not in the least ashamed,  
 Neither do they feel abashed ;  
 Therefore they shall fall among them that fall,  
 In the time when I punish them they shall stumble,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 16 Thus saith Jehovah :  
 Stand ye in the ways, and look,  
 And ask for the old paths ;  
 Where is the good way, and walk ye in it,  
 And ye shall find rest to your souls.  
 But they said : " We will not walk in it."

12. Comp. Dent. xxviii. 30.

13. *בְּרָצָה בְּרָצָה* is a phrase of too frequent occurrence in reference to the acquisition of exorbitant or unjust gain, to admit of its being applied to concupiscence or evil lust in general, as Blayney proposes. *בְּרָצָה* has the force of *including*—both, or the one as well as the other.

14. *בַּת*, *daughter*, is omitted in thirty-eight MSS. and twenty-four printed editions. The combination *בַּת עַמִּי*, *the daughter of my people*, however, meaning the people themselves, is not foreign to Jeremiah. See chap. viii. 21, 22.—*בְּלִיזָה*, *slightly*, in the slightest manner. Comp. *בְּלִיזָה* falsely, *בְּלִיזָה* largely. *בְּלִיזָה* is an abstract noun, derived from the feminine Participle in Niph'al of *לָקַח*, *to be light*. For the flattering messages of the false

prophets, as here expressed, comp. Ezek. xiii. 10.

15. *בְּרָצָה*, the Hiphil used intransitively, with the signification of *בָּשָׁם*, *to be ashamed*. Verbs in Hebrew express sometimes, not the action, but the duty or obligation to perform it. Comp. *לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה*, *which ought not to be done*, Gen. xx. 9. *שָׁמְרוּ*, *should keep*, Mal. ii. 7. So here, though the verb be in the preterite, it has the same force. *בְּ* is intensive.

16. The people are directed to act the part of travellers, who, when perplexed as to which way they shall choose, stop and diligently inquire in what direction they ought to proceed. The good and ancient paths were easily to be found, if they had only had a heart to walk in them ; but this they obstinately refused

- 17 I appointed also watchmen over you, saying :  
Hearken to the sound of the trumpet ;  
But they said : " We will not hearken."  
18 Therefore, hear, O ye nations !  
And know, O assembled people !  
What is among them.  
19 Hear, O earth !  
Behold ! I will bring calamity upon this people,  
The fruit of their own inventions ;  
Because they have not attended to my words,  
And my law they have rejected.  
20 To what purpose is this to me, that frankincense should come  
from Sheba,  
And sweet cane from a distant country ?  
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable,  
Neither are your sacrifices pleasing to me.  
21 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah :  
Behold ! I will set stumbling-blocks before this people ;  
And the fathers and the sons shall fall over them together,  
Both the neighbour and his friend, and shall perish.  
22 Thus saith Jehovah :  
Behold ! a people shall come from the north country,  
A great nation shall be roused from the recesses of the earth ;  
23 They handle the bow and the lance,

to do. *לְנָחֵם* being of common gender, admits of both *נָחַם* and *נָחַם* being connected with it. *לְנָחֵם* as *נָחַם*, Is. xxviii. 12, signifies *rest, tranquillity*, and not *restoration*, as Blayney proposes. *לְנָחֵם* properly signifies to *contract, to bring together, to shrink* for fear ; to draw back into a state of rest, to restrain : in Hiphil, *to compose, make tranquil*.

17. By the *לְנָחֵם*, *watchmen*, prophets are meant, on whom it devolved to announce to the people the impending calamities which they were inspired to predict. Ezek. iii. 17 ; Hab. ii. 1.

18. *לְנָחֵם*, *congregation*, or assembled people, cannot well in this connexion be interpreted of the Jews, but must be regarded as parallel with *לְנָחֵם*, the nations immediately preceding. The Babylonian army seems to be intended.

19. *לְנָחֵם* is here to be taken in its

utmost latitude of meaning—all the inhabitants of the globe. *וְ* prefixed in *וְלְנָחֵם* is redundant.

20. Comp. Is. xliii. 24 ; lx. 6. No external services can be acceptable to God while the heart is not influenced by supreme regard to him.

21. The Babylonians, described in the following verses, were the stumbling-blocks or instruments that were to effect the fall or ruin of the Jews. This ruin was to be indiscriminate. For *לְנָחֵם* the Keri has *לְנָחֵם*, which is found in the text of a great many MSS. and in three ancient editions.

22. *לְנָחֵם*, *the remotest regions of the earth*, i.e. as known to the ancients. Comp. Is. xiv. 13. With the northern parts they were in general but little acquainted.

23. The Chaldean soldiery appear in

They are cruel, and shew no pity ;  
 Their voice roareth like the sea,  
 And they ride upon horses ;  
 Fully arranged as men for the battle—  
 Against thee, O daughter of Zion !

- 24 We have heard the report of them,  
 Our hands are relaxed ;  
 Anguish hath seized us,  
 Pain as that of a woman in travail.
- 25 Go not out into the field,  
 Neither walk in the road ;  
 For the enemy hath a sword,  
 There is fear on every side.
- 26 O daughter of my people ! put on sackcloth,  
 And roll thyself in the ashes ;  
 Make thee a mourning as for an only child,  
 A most bitter lamentation ;  
 For suddenly the destroyer shall come upon us.
- 27 I have appointed thee an assayer among my people,  
 An explorer, that thou mayest know and try their way.

some respects to have resembled the Cossacks of modern times, especially in the use of the lance on horseback. They fight principally in small bodies, with which they attack the enemy on all sides, but principally on the flanks, and in the rear, rushing upon them at full speed, with a dreadful hurrah, and with levelled lances. *כָּאִישׁ*, like a man, or men, i.e. altogether such as men are accustomed to be, fully, most perfectly prepared and ready. *כִּי* has here an intensive force, which I have expressed by the adverb *fully* before the participle. The description closes with great power by the addition of *בְּחִצֵּיךְ*, against thee, O daughter of Zion ! after it might have been supposed to have been completed.

24, 25. The Jews, alarmed at their danger, give expression to the poignancy of their sorrow, and caution one another not to expose themselves to the enemy by going without the walls of the city. A considerable number of MSS., the Complut. Polyglott, and all the ancient versions, support the Keri in read-

ing *הָלִכְי וְהִצֵּי* instead of *הָלִכְי וְהִצֵּי*.

26. Jehovah is the speaker in this and the following verse. *הִתְגַּלְגַּל* Kimchi explains by *הִתְגַּלְגַּל*, roll thyself. The LXX. and Vulg. render *sprinkle*—supposing the reference to be to the custom of persons' sprinkling dust over their heads as a token of excessive grief. The former signification is best sustained. Comp. Ezek. xxvii. 30 ; Micah i. 10. *הִתְגַּלְגַּל*, a lamentation of bitternesses, for most bitter lamentation, expressed by beating the breast, as *קָדַשׁ* properly signifies. The destroyer was Nebuchadnezzar.

27. In this verse and the three following, the language of metallurgy is employed metaphorically to express the destination of the prophet, and the character of the moral materials on which he was called to operate. The proper and the metaphorical, however, are intermingled, in order to obviate any misunderstanding on the part of the hearers. *נִסֶּה*, a trier, from *נִסָּה*, to prove, or try metals, as *קִשֵּׁה*, a fowler, from *קִשָּׁה* ;

- 28 They are all desperate revolvers,  
They are conversant with detraction ;  
They are copper and iron,  
They are all corrupters.
- 29 The bellows snort,  
The lead is consumed by the fire ;  
In vain the refiner refineth,  
For the wicked are not separated.
- 30 Rejected silver they shall be called ,  
For Jehovah hath rejected them.

an oppressor, from פָּעַץ. Thus the LXX.

δοκιμαστήν. Syr. حَمْدَانْ. Maurer and Hitzig consider כֶּנֶזֶר to be compounded of the noun כֶּנֶז, *gold*, and the preposition, only the Dagesh Compensative should be inserted in the Beth. Scholz, Gesenius, and others, take the word in the same acceptation as in chap. i. 18, where Jeremiah is said to be constituted a fortified city. Neither interpretation is satisfactory. The former, *without gold*, comes in awkwardly after "my people;" and the latter, *a fortified city*, little accords with "a trier of metals." I am, therefore, of opinion, that the term takes here the signification

of the Arab. بَصِر, *videns fuit, rem quæ-*

*sicit ac scrutatus fuit*; hence بَاصِر, *bene*

*videns, perspicax*; مَبْصُر, *probatio*; and have rendered it *explorer*—the concrete for the abstract. Michaelis gives this sense by changing the punctuation into that of the Piel Participle כֶּנֶזֶר, *looking carefully*, or one who thus looks. Ewald construes in the same way, only he adopts the signification of *cutting*, which he applies to the separation of the good from the bad portions of metal. כֶּנֶזֶר and כֶּנֶזֶר are thus parallel, and nearly identical in signification.

28. כֶּנֶזֶר is quite equivalent to a Superlative. The roots, indeed, are not the same, but they are so completely cognate, both in sound and in sense, as to admit of such construction. Maurer renders *contumacissimi*; Ewald: *re schle-*

testen ter Beschlechten. For the paronomasia comp. chap. v. 23; Hos. iv. 16. The images of copper and iron may be employed to describe the ignoble and base character of the Jews, comp. Is. lx. 17, or to set forth their obduracy, Is. xlviii. 4.

29. כֶּנֶז, *bellows*, from נָפַח, *to blow*. נָפַח may either be the root of the verb, *to snort*, and designed in this place to express the sound produced by the continued blowing of the bellows; or it may be the Niphal of נָפַח, *to burn*. The former best suits the connexion. Thus Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Dahler, De Wette, Scholz and Umbreit. Instead of כֶּנֶז, which affords no proper sense, the Keri divides and reads כֶּנֶז, *consumed by the fire*. כֶּנֶז being masculine and כֶּנֶז feminine, presents no obstacle to this construction, since the gender of the noun is equivalent to the neuter, and is formal, not real. For the form כֶּנֶז, see on ver 27. Anciently, before quicksilver was known, lead was employed for the purpose of separating silver from the baser metal with which it was mixed. The meaning of the verse is, that, though the utmost pains had been taken with the Jews, and every means assiduously employed which was calculated to purify them from idolatry, all had proved fruitless. They would not be reclaimed. They could not be separated from the worshippers of idols.

30. As silver, which is so completely mixed with alloy as to be utterly worthless, so the Jewish people had by their rejection of the worship and service of the true God, rendered themselves the objects of rejection on his part.

## CHAPTER VII.

This chapter and the two following form a new portion of the book, and appear to have been composed on occasion of some public festival in the reign of Jehoiakim. That the multitudes who came up from the country might have the benefit of his instructions, the prophet is commanded to take his station at the gate of the temple, and direct their attention to the nature of true religion. Instead of suffering themselves to be deceived by a false confidence in the temple, they were thoroughly to reform their conduct, 2—7. They had been taught by the false prophets, that if they only attended to the ceremonial worship, it was not necessary for them to be strict in their morals, 8—10; but they had only to contemplate the fate of those who had lived at Shiloh, in order to have a specimen of what they themselves had to expect, 11—15. Their inveterate propensity to idolatry rendered all means to reclaim them nugatory, 16—19. They are, therefore, threatened with a tremendous judgment, 20, which their sacrifices—substituted for obedience—would not avert, 21—28. After further describing their idolatrous character and practices, 29—31, the prophet again threatens them with the infliction of condign punishment, 32—34.

- 
- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah,
  - 2 saying: Stand in the gate of the house of Jehovah, and proclaim there this word, and say :  
Hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of Judah,  
That enter these gates to worship Jehovah.
  - 3 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel :  
Reform your ways and your doings,  
And I will still cause you to dwell in this place.

1. Notwithstanding the great reformation effected by Josiah, the people of the Jews soon relapsed into idolatry. In this they were encouraged by Jehoiakim, who did evil in the sight of the Lord, and thus the national guilt was awfully increased. Though they again adopted the worship of idols, yet it was in conjunction with that of Jehovah; and they appear to have come from different parts of Judea to worship at the temple on the occasion when this prophetic discourse was delivered.

2. It is not certain in which gate Jeremiah is here commanded to take his station. Some think it was the principal gate on the east side of the temple, which led into the large outer court; others, the gate of the court of Israel, within

that of the women. As the former is always mentioned under the name of פֶּתַח, or *porch*, it was more likely the latter. This receives confirmation from the other gates being mentioned immediately after as those at which the Jews entered: namely, that leading into the outer court, or court of the Gentiles, and that leading into the court of the women, from which a third gate, as above stated, led into the court of Israel. Those whom the prophet addressed had come in through the two first, and were just about to enter the court where sacrifice was offered and worship performed.

3. As the Jews already dwelt at Jerusalem, בְּ the Piel, or intensive form of the verb, must here have a continuative

- 4 Put not your trust in words of falsehood, saying,  
The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah,  
The temple of Jehovah are these.
- 5 But, if ye will thoroughly reform your ways and your deeds,  
If ye will thoroughly execute justice between a man and his  
neighbour,
- 6 If ye will not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow,  
And will not shed innocent blood in this place,  
And will not follow other gods to your hurt ;
- 7 Then I will cause you still to dwell in this place,  
In the land which I gave to your fathers  
For ever and ever.
- 8 Behold ! ye put your trust in words of falsehood,  
Which are to no profit.
- 9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery,  
And swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal,  
And follow other gods which ye know not ;
- 10 And yet come, and stand before me in this house,  
Which is called by my name,

force, or it must have a permissive signification. There is no example of the simple signification to *dwell* attaching to this conjugation, so that the rendering of the Vulgate, which Blayney adopts, *I will dwell with you*, is not sustained ; comp. ver. 12.

4. Men in all ages have evinced a proneness to attribute to external and ceremonial circumstances a virtue which does not inhere in them, imagining that the simple observance of them will supersede the necessity of the strict pursuit of holiness. The Jews supposed, that because the temple was dedicated to the worship of Jehovah, he, as their tutelar God, would effectually protect it, and all who came to worship in it. The triple repetition of *אני אהיה* expresses the intense feeling of false confidence which the Jews cherished. Comp. for similar triple superlatives, Is. vi. 3 ; Jer. xxii. 29. *אני אהיה*, these, refers to the sacred buildings of the temple.

6. The incidental use of *אני*, as interchanging with *אני*, does not imply that the construction which was introduced by *אני* is thereby interrupted. The con-

nexion requires it to be carried forward to the apodosis, which is introduced by *אני* at the beginning of ver. 7. There are other instances in which the two negatives have the same signification, though generally they correspond in usage to the Greek *μη* and *ου*.

7. *אני אהיה*, from *eternity to eternity*, is the strongest formula by which perpetuity of duration is expressed in Hebrew. Comp. chap. xxv. 5 ; Neh. ix. 5 ; Ps. xc. 2. The words are to be connected with *אני אהיה*, *I will still cause you to dwell*.

8. *אני* is understood before *אני*, and *אני* marks the end or issue.

9. The infinitives here are all historical, and are put in the absolute state for the sake of emphasis.

10. Nothing could be more incongruous than to indulge in all manner of wickedness, and yet appear in the temple as true worshippers of Jehovah, except the absurd reason assigned for such indulgence. The Jews fully counted upon the divine protection in the commission of the crimes here specified, on the mere ground of their external presentation of

- And say : " We are delivered ; "  
 That ye may commit all these abominations ?
- 11 Is then this house which is called by my name  
 A den of robbers in your eyes ?  
 Yea, behold ! I have seen it, saith Jehovah.
- 12 But go now to my place which was in Shiloh,  
 Where I caused my name to dwell at first,  
 And see what I did to it,  
 On account of the wickedness of my people Israel.
- 13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith Jehovah,  
 And I spake to you,  
 Rising up early and speaking,  
 But ye would not hearken ;  
 And I called to you,  
 But ye made no reply :
- 14 Therefore I will do to the house which is called by my name,  
 In which ye put your trust,  
 And to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers,  
 As I have done to Shiloh.
- 15 And I will cast you away from my presence,  
 As I cast away all your brethren,  
 The whole posterity of Ephraim.

themselves before God at the place which he had chosen. *אֲנִי יְהוָה* is the prophetic future, designed to express the certainty of the conviction that no punishment should overtake them. The words *אֲנִי יְהוָה*, *in order to commit*, are not those of the people, but of the prophet. All that they say is : *We are delivered*, safe, secure ; we have nothing to fear. We have offered our sacrifices, and thereby ensured the favour of Jehovah, which he will not fail to manifest towards us, in defending us against all who would injure us.

11. Do you consider this sacred edifice, which hath been devoted to my worship, a fit place for such characters as you to appear in ? You merely regard it as an asylum in which you may find immunity from the punishment which your wickedness has deserved. The metaphor is taken from the practice of robbers, who, in order to escape from the consequences

of their deeds of violence, betake themselves to inaccessible caves among the cliffs of mountains.

12—15. Shiloh was situated in the tribe of Ephraim, to the north of Bethel, and was celebrated for having been the place where the tabernacle and the ark remained from the days of Joshua down to the death of Eli. Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Sam. iv. 3. That it had suffered severely when the inhabitants of the northern kingdom were removed by the Assyrians, notwithstanding all the sacredness which might have continued to attach to it, is implied in what is declared, verses 14, 15. However reduced, it continued to be inhabited in the time of Jeremiah, chap. xli. 5. Dr. Robinson found its ruins under the name of *Seilun*, on his way from Jerusalem to Shechem. In the destruction of that place, and the punishment inflicted upon the surrounding country, the Jews had an impressive



- 16 Therefore, pray not thou for this people,  
Neither raise on their behalf a cry or a prayer;  
Neither make intercession to me,  
For I will not hear thee.
- 17 Dost thou not see what they do in the cities of Judah,  
And in the streets of Jerusalem?
- 18 The children gather wood,  
And the fathers kindle the fire,  
And the women knead the dough,  
To make cakes to the queen of heaven,  
And to pour out libations to other gods,  
In order to provoke me to anger.

example of the manner in which they, and the temple in which they trusted, should be treated, if they did not repent. —The י at the beginning of verse 14 marks the apodosis, and is to be rendered inferentially.

16, 17. In these verses the prophet is addressed in language which conveys an awful idea of the depravity of the Jewish people. As they would not by repentance avert the punishment to be inflicted by the Babylonians, the prophet was not to attempt to do it by his prayers.

18. Idolatry was not practised by individuals in private merely, but also publicly, and was maintained by the joint efforts of whole families. Even the tender hands of childhood were not spared their contributions. They and their fathers made the necessary preparations for the fire, and the mothers baked the cakes which were to be presented to the object of idolatrous worship. What this object was, interpreters are not agreed. Some, following the reading אֲשֶׁת־יָרֵיחַ, and taking it in the sense of *workmanship*, explain it of the heavenly bodies, and consider the worship of the planets generally to be intended. To these, especially the sun and moon, the ancients attributed a powerful influence on human affairs, and were specially addicted to their worship. אֲשֶׁת־יָרֵיחַ, which is supported by the suffrage of thirty-nine MSS., originally seven, and perhaps five more, and by correction two, is found in the printed text of the Soncino and Complut. editions. The LXX. render

ἡ σπαρτιά, with which agree the Syr. and the Targ. There seems, however, no valid ground for departing from the received text, the reading of which is אֲשֶׁת־יָרֵיחַ, *the queen of heaven*, especially as the LXX. render it by ἡ βασίλισσα τῶν οὐρανῶν, chap. xlv. 17—19, 25, the only other passages in which the term occurs. The Vulg. has throughout *regina cæli*. That by this title the moon is meant, there can be no doubt; and it is the opinion now almost universally entertained. The idea that the sun is intended, only with a feminine termination, is entirely exploded. The worship of that luminary obtained very extensively among heathen nations. By Horace she was celebrated as queen of the stars:

Siderum regina bicornis, audi,

Luna, puellas.—*Carm. Secul.* 35.

The Phœnicians originally worshipped her under the name of אֲשֶׁת־יָרֵיחַ, *Ashtoreth*, and, from her appearance after the change, under that of אֲשֶׁת־יָרֵיחַ, *the two-horned Ashtoreth*, though there is some reason to conclude that, at length, they transferred the worship to the planet Venus. She was regarded as the wife of בַּל, *Baal*, מוֹלֵךְ, *Molech*, or מֶלֶךְ, *Melech*, the king of heaven. On ancient medals we find the crescent sometimes placed on the shoulder of a priest, and sometimes above in the firmament. These two deities, being the one male and the other female, were symbolical of the generative powers of nature; and, in the ideas thus naturally suggested, ori-

- 19 Is it me they provoke to anger? saith Jehovah;  
Is it not themselves, to the confusion of their own faces?
- 20 Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah:  
Behold! mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon  
this place,  
Upon man and upon beast,  
Upon the trees of the field,  
And upon the fruit of the ground;  
And it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.
- 21 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
Add your burnt-offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh.
- 22 For I spake not to your fathers, nor charged them,  
In the day when I brought them out from the land of Egypt,  
Respecting either burnt-offering or sacrifice.
- 23 But this thing I charged them, saying:

ginated the licentious character of the worship of Astarte, especially among the Phenicians, who had females in her temples that prostituted themselves in honour of her. The festival of the new moon was specially destructive of female virtue. It is doubtless to this libidinous superstition Ephraim Syrus refers, when describing it as still existing in his time in Mesopotamia. He says, "The wife of a Chaldean may put him to shame, because she must accommodate herself to her star. He must also exhort his daughter to become a disciple of the moon, and learn prostitution." And again: "Who introduced the worship of the irrational goddess, on whose festivals the women practise prostitution?" Gesen. Isaiah, vol. iii. p. 341. The Babylonians worshipped the moon under the name of *כִּיּוּרְרָא*, corrupted by Herodian into Mylitta, *i. e.* *genetrix*. The antiquity of such worship we learn from the protestation of Job, chap. xxxi. 26, 27; and a memorial of it we have in most modern languages, as Lundi, Monday, Montag, Mondag, &c.—It does not appear that the Jews offered sacrifices to the moon, though the Egyptians did, Herodot. book ii. 47. The only allusion to which reference is here made is the presentation of cakes, *כִּיּוּרִים*, so called from *כָּן*, to prepare, make ready, which suggests the idea of something peculiar

in the composition of them. LXX. *κavovas*. They most probably consisted of fine flour, mixed with honey, raisins, &c., and were round and flat to resemble the disc of the moon. The "other gods" specified do not mean, other than the moon, but other than Jehovah.

19. *אֵיךְ* and *אֵיךְ* are in forcible contrast.

20. Compare v. 17.

21. Because the Jews joined the worship of other gods to that of Jehovah, he here declares that he would not accept the sacrifices which they offered to him. The *חֵלֶב*, *δλοκαυώματα*, or burnt-offerings, were entirely consumed by fire on the altar; the other sacrifices were for the most part eaten by those who offered them and by their friends. They are told that they might eat the one kind as well as the other; God would have no regard to any of them. Comp. Amos v. 22.

22, 23. A vast number of MSS., three of the early editions, and all the versions read, with the Keri, *הִוְצִי*, instead of *הִוְצִי*.—The apparent contradiction between the statement here made, and the fact that the Mosaic institutes abound in sacrificial enactments, may be removed in two ways. *First*, that moral obligation was repeatedly inculcated upon the Hebrews, before the institution of the sacrificial code; and that almost in the identical language employed in the pro-

- Obey my voice,  
 And I will be your God,  
 And ye shall be my people :  
 And walk ye in all the way respecting which I shall charge you,  
 That it may be well with you.
- 24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear,  
 But walked in the counsels, in the obstinacy of their wicked  
 heart,  
 And went backward, and not forward.
- 25 From the day that your fathers went out from the land of  
 Egypt,  
 Unto this day,  
 I have sent to you all my servants the prophets,  
 Daily rising early and sending them :
- 26 But they hearkened not to me, nor inclined their ear,  
 But hardened their neck ;  
 They acted worse than their fathers.
- 27 Though thou speak all these words to them,  
 Yet they will not hearken to thee ;  
 Though thou call to them,  
 They will make thee no reply.
- 28 Say, therefore, to them :  
 This is the nation that will not hearken

phet. "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, &c. Exod. xv. 26. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, &c. xix. 5. Then follows the proclamation of the moral code, amidst all the solemnities of Sinai; which code, to mark its superior claims, was written on two tables of stone, and alone deposited in the ark of the covenant. Comp. Deut. v. vi. It was not till afterwards, that the special regulations were given, relative to the different kinds of sacrifice, which properly constituted the Levitical law. *Secondly*, it is not unusual for the Hebrews to express in absolute terms what is to be understood relatively and comparatively. Thus, *to hate*, sometimes

means *to love less*, Gen. xxix. 30, 31; Mal. i. 2, 3. Comp. Luke xiv. 26, with Matt. x. 37; and, as more parallel with the present instance, Hos. vi. 6. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Comp. 1 Sam. xv. 22. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." According to this idiom, the meaning will be: That ritual observances were regarded by God as matters of secondary importance, which, when substituted for the moral duties required by the law, and especially the first and great commandment, supreme love to Himself as the source and pattern of all excellence, He could not but treat with merited reprobation.

24—28. All the instruction with which the Hebrews had been furnished, from

To the voice of Jehovah their God ;  
 Neither will they receive instruction :  
 The truth hath perished ;  
 It is cut off from their mouth.

- 29 Shear off thy hair, and cast it away,  
 And raise a lamentation on the high places ;  
 For Jehovah hath rejected and cast off  
 The generation with which he is wroth.
- 30 For the children of Judah have practised wickedness in my  
 sight, saith Jehovah ;  
 They have placed their abominable objects  
 In the house which is called by my name,  
 To pollute it.
- 31 They have also built the high places of Tophet,  
 Which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom,  
 To burn their sons and their daughters in the fire ;  
 Which I charged not, neither did it come into my mind.
- 32 Therefore, behold ! the days are coming, saith Jehovah,  
 When it shall no more be called Tophet,  
 Or the valley of the son of Hinnom,  
 But the valley of slaughter :  
 For they shall bury in Tophet,  
 Till there be no more room.
- 33 And the carcases of this people shall be food

the earliest periods of their national history, had proved ineffectual in restraining them from idolatry. Nor would the solemn warnings uttered by the prophet be more availing. They had become utter strangers to true religion. *יָמָיו*, *day*, ver. 25, is used adverbially for *יָמָיו* *daily*.

29. Jerusalem is here addressed under the image of a female, who, in the depth of her grief for the loss of her children, deprives her head of its chief ornament, and betakes herself to the hills to bewail her bereavement. For such indulgence in grief, comp. Is. xv. 2 ; Ezek. vii. 16—18 ; Judges xi. 37, 38.

30, 31. To such an awful extent of wickedness did the profane Manasseh proceed, that he erected idolatrous altars within the sacred precincts of the temple.

2 Kings xxi. 4—7 ; xxiii. 4 ; Jer. xxxii. 34. Comp. Ezek. viii. For Tophet, see on chap. ii. 23 ; and Is. xxx. 33. The *תּוֹפֶת*, "*high places* of Tophet," were the places for the worship of Moloch, erected, no doubt, on the heights along the south side of the valley, and facing Mount Zion. So far were the Hebrews from receiving any countenance from Jehovah in the performance of their cruel rites, that, on the contrary, he had severely interdicted them. Deut. xii. 31. The figure *meiosis* is employed, by which more is implied than is expressed.

32—34. As a just retribution of their wickedness in devoting the bodies of their children to Moloch, in the valley of Tophet, it is predicted, that it should become a place in which, as well as in Jerusalem, such multitudes of the Jews

For the birds of the heavens, and for the beasts of the earth,  
And none shall scare them away.

- 34 And I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah,  
And from the streets of Jerusalem,  
The sound of gladness, and the sound of joy ;  
The sound of the bridegroom, and the sound of the bride ;  
For the land shall be desolate.

should be slain by the enemy, that it would not afford sufficient room for their interment. Their dead bodies should lie scattered on the ground, to be devoured by animals of prey. In ver. 34, reference is made to the joyous processions in which the bride and bridegroom are

led through the streets, accompanied by bands of singers and musicians, which are common in many parts of the East, and even among the Jews in some parts of Europe. See my *Biblical Researches and Travels in Russia*, p. 217.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The same subject is continued in the beginning of this chapter, as that with which the preceding one concluded, only, the prophet heightens the aggravations of the impending calamity, 1—3. The cause of the judicial visitation is again inquired into, and shown to be the obstinate and unnatural disposition of the Jews, 4—7. The prophets and priests are next inculpated as helping forward the evil, 8—12. The alarm of the people follows on an additional threatening, 13—15. In the north of Palestine is seen the invading army, which no artifices could arrest, and the operations of which would be horrid, 16—18. The picture is then transferred to the exile, in which the captives are represented as bewailing their forlorn condition, in response to which, the prophet gives varied expression to the depth and pressure of his sympathetic grief, 19—22 ; ix. 1.

- 1 At that time, saith Jehovah,  
They shall bring the bones of the kings of Judah,  
And the bones of his princes,  
The bones of the priests,  
And the bones of the prophets,

1. The Keri כרי, without the conjunctive Vau, is found in the text of many MSS., and in some of the earlier editions. In their eagerness to obtain whatever they could grasp in the way of plunder, the Babylonians would violate

the sanctuaries of the dead,—especially those of the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem, in whose graves ornaments and other treasures were deposited. According to Josephus, *Antiq. vii. ch. 15. § 3*, Hylecanus, the high priest, took out

- And the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem,  
Out of their graves ;
- 2 And they shall spread them out  
To the sun and to the moon,  
And to all the host of heaven ;  
Which they loved, and which they served,  
Which they followed, and which they consulted,  
And which they worshipped :  
They shall not be gathered, neither shall they be buried ;  
They shall be as dung on the surface of the ground.
- 3 And death shall be chosen rather than life  
By all the residue that are left of this wicked race,  
In all the remaining places whither I shall have driven them,  
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
- 4 Thou shalt further say to them :  
Thus saith Jehovah :  
Shall they fall, and shall they not rise again ?  
Shall they turn away, and shall they not return ?
- 5 Why doth this people of Jerusalem apostatise with a perpetual  
apostasy ?  
They hold fast deceit,  
They refuse to return.
- 6 I hearkened and heard :  
They spake not aright ;  
No one repented of his wickedness,  
Saying : What have I done ?  
They have all turned to their courses,  
As a horse rusheth into the battle.

of one of the rooms in the sepulchre of David no less a sum than three thousand talents, and Herod a great deal more. It was quite customary to bury the crown (sometimes very costly), the sceptre, and other insignia of royalty along with kings when interred.

2. In their reckless search, the barbarians would never think of replacing the bones which they had disturbed, but would leave them exposed to open gaze. The objects of idolatrous worship are here introduced with admirable effect, as unconcerned spectators of the indignity offered to their former worshippers. The

strong devotion of the Jews to their service is depicted, by accumulating description upon description.

3. The condition of survivors would be more pitiable than that of the dead. The words *הַחַיִּים הַיְּסוּדִים* are in apposition—not in construction.

4, 5. Is the case of the Jews then absolutely desperate ? The only reply to the question is furnished by the obstinate obliquity of their conduct. Though warned and punished, they still refuse to render undivided homage to Jehovah.

6. There is no reason why the plural *הַדְּרֹכִים*, *their courses*, should be changed

- 7 The very stork in the heavens knoweth her seasons,  
The turtle-dove also, and the swallow, and the crane  
Observe the time of their arrival;  
But my people know not the judgment of Jehovah.
- 8 How can ye say : We are wise,  
And the law of Jehovah is with us ?  
Behold ! surely in vain hath He made it,  
The pen of the copyists is vain.
- 9 The wise men are ashamed,  
They are confounded and taken ;  
Behold ! they have despised the word of Jehovah ;  
What, then, can be the wisdom they possess ?
- 10 Therefore I will give their wives to others,  
Their fields to those who shall possess them ;  
For, from the least to the greatest  
They are all greedy of gain ;  
From the prophet to the priest  
They all act falsely.
- 11 For they heal the breach of the daughter of my people slightly,  
Saying, Peace, peace,  
When there is no peace.
- 12 Are they ashamed when they have committed abomination ?  
They are not even in the least ashamed,  
Neither do they feel abashed ;

into *מַדְבָּרָא*, *their course*, as proposed in the Keri. The wicked habits of the Jews were numerous and diversified. The point of comparison to the war-horse, is the mad rapidity with which he furiously rushes into the midst of the battle.

7. The instinct of migratory birds prompts them, with the most unfailing regularity, to return from their winter abodes, on the advance of spring, and to repair thither again in the end of autumn. Contrasted with this, the conduct of God's people in persisting in their refusal to return to him, could not but appear most unnatural. The plural *מִדְבָּרָא*, *her seasons*, is more appropriate than *מִדְבָּרָא*, *her season*, both the autumnal and spring migrations being regarded. For the names of the two last-mentioned birds, see on Is. xxxviii. 14.

8. Possessing, as they did, the Divine law, the Jews had the means of becoming the wisest nation on the face of the earth; but, neglecting to improve these means, and acting in direct opposition to the law, they evinced the greatest folly. As to them, the law was as if it had never been given. Copies, however multiplied, were of no utility. I cannot accede to the suggestion made by Scholz, that there is here a reference to any corruption of the text, by an omission of those passages which denounced idolatry.

9. Rejeeling the only true source of wisdom, how could the professedly learned among them make any pretensions to that invaluable treasure? *הִכְמִיחָהּ* lit. *the wisdom of what?*

10—12. See on chap. vi. 12—15. The LXX. omit these three verses with

Therefore they shall fall among them that fall,  
In the time of their punishment they shall stumble,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 13 I will utterly destroy them, saith Jehovah;  
There shall be no grapes on the vine,  
Nor figs on the fig-tree,  
The very leaf shall wither;  
For I will appoint them those who shall overrun them.
- 14 Why do we sit still?  
Assemble yourselves, and let us enter the fortified cities,  
And let us be silent there;  
For Jehovah our God hath reduced us to silence,  
And given us water of poison to drink;  
Because we have sinned against Jehovah.
- 15 We expected peace, but no good came,  
A time of healing, but behold! terror.
- 16 From Dan the snorting of his horses is heard,  
At the sound of the neighing of his strong ones,  
The whole land trembleth;  
For they are come, and they consume  
The land and all that is in it,  
The city and those who inhabit it.

the exception of the first two lines of the 10th. The repetitious character of many parts of the Book of Jeremiah leaves no reason to doubt that the repetition here of chap. vi. 12—15 is genuine. Theodotion and the Hexaplar Syriac supply the omission of the LXX.

13. The vintage and harvest are frequently employed figuratively as images of complete destruction; but here the terms are to be taken in their literal application. In *וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם יְהוָה* there is an ellipsis of *אֶת־* before the last word. For *יְהוָה* upwards of twenty MSS. read *יְהוָה*, but less suitably to the connexion.

14. The Jews in the country are here introduced, exciting one another to repair to the fortified cities for defence against the invading foe. *יְהוָה* instead of *יְהוָה*, with *ה* paragogic from *נָחַם*, *פִּירֵאֵשׁ*, lit. *water of the poisonous plant*. What this plant was, is disputed. In my

translation of Hosea x. 4, I have adopted the poppy, proposed by Gesenius, as likely to be what is intended by *פִּירֵאֵשׁ*; but I now deem it preferable to adopt a less definite rendering.

15. The infinitive absolute *יִהְיֶה* is used elliptically for *יִהְיֶה לָנוּ*. The hopes excited by the false prophets had completely failed. Instead of a healthy and prosperous state of public affairs, nothing was experienced but the horrors of war.

16. The tribe of Dan was conterminous to the territory of Phœnicia, which latter having been passed by Nebuchadnezzar, he entered the land of Israel. The report of its invasion by the hostile cavalry, must have spread consternation among all the inhabitants. That *פָּרָסִים*, which is elsewhere translated *bulls*, is here and chapters xlvii. 3, l. 11, to be rendered *steeds* or *stallions*, is evident from *stamping* or *neighing* being connected with the term. It is the plural



- 17 For behold! I will send among you serpents, basilisks,  
Which are not to be charmed,  
And they shall bite you mortally,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 18 My exhilaration within me is sorrow,  
My heart within me is faint.
- 19 Behold! the sound of the cry of the daughter of my people,  
From a distant land :—  
Is Jehovah not in Zion ?  
Is her King not in her ?—  
Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images ?  
With strange vanities ?
- 20 The harvest is past, and the summer is ended,  
Yet we are not delivered.
- 21 For the breach of the daughter of my people I am broken  
down ;  
I mourn ; astonishment hath seized me.
- 22 Is there no balsam in Gilead ?

of נָחֵשׁ, a mighty or strong one. This application of the term is peculiar to Jeremiah. Adjectives thus used alone without the substantive, Gesenius calls *epitheta ornantia*. Heb. Gram. § 104, 2 a.

17. Here Jehovah is introduced as personally addressing the Jews. By serpents and basilisks dangerous enemies are meant, whose destructive power no means could countervail. These animals have been and still are rendered harmless by the arts of serpent-charmers, who abound in the East, and not only entice them by certain musical sounds to follow them, but by a particular pressure on the neck render them incapable of darting at any object. For נָחֵשׁ, basilisk, see on Is. xi. 8.

18. With respect to מְגִלִּיתָּהּ there is great diversity in the orthography, but no valid objection can be taken to מְגִלִּיתָּהּ, a derivative from מָגַל, Arab. مَلْج, *niluit*,

*fulsit sol oriens*; and in the fifth conjugation, *hilaris fuit*; hence the signification of the noun, *hilarity, exhilaration*. Aquila, in the Hexaplar Syriac, *latitia*. The division of the word into the two מְגִלִּיתָּהּ is altogether to be rejected, as

either affording no sense at all, or one quite unsuitable to the context. The language of this verse and of those which immediately follow, excepting the twentieth, is that of the prophet, and is expressive of the poignant grief which he felt in the prospect of the destruction of his country.

19. The prophet in anticipation hears the sad complaints of his countrymen exiled in Babylon. They now thought of their God and king. They thought likewise of Zion as his holy habitation; and were proceeding to inquire how it was that he had not interposed to save his temple and people from the desolating attack of barbarians, when they were interrupted, not by the information that it had been owing to no want of power or fidelity on his part, but by a pointed interrogation which involved the deepest criminality on theirs. Their idolatry was the cause of their exile.

20. These words of the exiles have the air of a proverb. The meaning is obvious: one favourable season after another, which promised them deliverance, had passed away without bringing any melioration of their circumstances.

21, 22. Most deeply affected by the

Is there no physician there ?

Why then is not health restored to the daughter of my people ?

23 O that my head were water,

And mine eyes a fountain of tears !

Then would I weep by day and by night

For the slain of the daughter of my people.

deplorable condition of his exiled countrymen, the prophet inquires whether no appropriate means could be found for effecting their restoration. Whether by רִפְיָא we are to understand the *opobalsamum* or *myrobalanus*, so celebrated by Pliny, Strabo, and other ancient writers ; or whether, with Bochart and others, we are to regard it as the resin drawn from the terebinth, cannot be determined. So much is certain, that it was celebrated for its efficacy in healing wounds, and that it abounded in Gilead, or the region to the east of the Jordan, Gen. xxxvii. 25 ; xlii. 11 ; Jer. xli. 11 ; li. 8. It would appear from ver. 22 that, owing to the numbers that resorted to Gilead for the purpose of obtaining this healing medicine, physicians had established themselves in that country, by whom it was not only collected, but also applied. — אֶרְפָּא, the word here rendered *health*, properly signifies *length*, from the circumstance of long linen bandages being em-

ployed in binding up wounds. Connected, as here, with the verb הָיָה, *to go, come, or be up, or over*, it may have special reference to the healing of the wounds, by the skin again coming upon them. Arab. سأف, *sanatio*.

23. From the circumstance that this and the following verse both begin with אֶרְפָּא, "O that !" they are in most versions made to commence the Ninth Chapter ; but as the former is merely a continued representation of the calamity described in the preceding verses, whereas the latter is the introduction to a somewhat lengthened description of the atrocities which formed the procuring cause of that calamity, it is more appropriate to divide the chapters as the Hebrew text does, by allotting twenty-three verses to Chap. VIII. The language of the prophet in ver. 23, is the most touchingly pathetic of any in the Book.

## CHAPTER IX.

Oppressed by a sense of the utter flagitiousness of those by whom he was surrounded, the prophet wishes that it were in his power to withdraw altogether from their society, 1—4. Fully admitting the danger of his position, the Lord assures him that their wickedness rendered them unwilling to know him, on which account he would subject them to painful trials, 5—8 ; the denunciation of which is interrupted by a momentary expression of grief on the part of Jeremiah, 9 ; and is resumed, 10. The calamity and its cause again alternate, 11—15. Mourning women are then summoned to pour forth their dirge, expressive of the slaughter of the inhabitants, 16—21 ; the Jews are exhorted to renounce every ground of false confidence, and practically to recognise the true character of Him who alone could deliver them, 22, 23 ; and the chapter closes with a threatening of vengeance on their enemies.

- 1 O THAT I had in the desert  
A lodging-place of travellers !  
That I might abandon my people,  
And go away from them :  
For they are all adulterers,  
An assembly of faithless men.
- 2 They bend their tongue, like their bow, with deceit,  
And are not valiant for truth in the land ;  
For they proceed from wickedness to wickedness,  
And they have not known Me,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 3 Beware each one of his companion,  
Neither confide ye in any brother ;  
For every brother will act a deceitful part,  
And every companion will go about with slander.
- 4 They will deceive each his companion,  
And will not speak the truth ;  
They have taught their tongue to speak falsehood,  
They take pains to act perversely.
- 5 Thy habitation is in the midst of deceit,  
Through deceit they refuse to know Me,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 6 Therefore thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :  
Behold ! I will melt them and try them ;  
For how can I otherwise act  
On account of the daughter of my people ?

1. *אָהֶל מִדְּבָר*, a caravanserai, or lodge for caravans or travelling companies in deserts and regions remote from towns. This lodge generally consists of a large square building, enclosing a court open above, round the sides of which are small arches, and within each of these is a dark cell or dormitory, without furniture or accommodation of any kind. For the most part the caravanserais are very filthy and abound in vermin. Yet such a place the prophet would have preferred to a residence among the abandoned inhabitants of Jerusalem, amid all the conveniences and comforts of that city. Comp. Ps. lv. 7, 8. The LXX. render *σταθμὸν ἑσχατον*, the most remote station,

which conveys only part of the idea, that of discomfort being necessarily involved in the Hebrew.—The crimes specified in this verse are those of idolatry and infidelity to Jehovah as the only true God.

2. The tongue is here aptly compared to the bow, and deceit to the arrow shot from it. Comp. Ps. lxiv. 3, 4.

4. *לִּיָּד*, to deride, mock, deceive, cognate with *לִּיָּד* and *לִּיָּד*, some of the forms of which it borrows in Piel, Hiphil, and Hophal. See Meier's Lexicon of Heb. roots, p. 412.

5. Jehovah addresses the prophet in this verse.

- 7 Their tongue is a murderous arrow,  
It speaketh deceit;  
With his mouth each speaketh peace to his companion,  
But inwardly he layeth his ambush.
- 8 Should I not punish them for these things? saith Jehovah;  
Should not my soul avenge itself on such a nation as this?
- 9 For the mountains I will set up a weeping and a wailing,  
And for the pastures of the desert a lamentation;  
Because they are consumed, so that no man crosseth them;  
The sound of the cattle is not heard;  
Both the birds of the heavens and the beasts are fled,  
They are gone.
- 10 I will make Jerusalem heaps, a den of jackals;  
And I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant?
- 11 Who is the wise man, that he may understand this?  
He to whom the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken, that he may declare it?  
On what account the land perisheth;  
It is consumed like the desert, so that no one crosseth it.
- 12 And Jehovah said:  
Because they have forsaken my law,  
Which I set before them;  
And have not hearkened to my voice,  
Nor walked in it;
- 13 But have followed the obstinacy of their own heart,  
And the Baals, which their fathers taught them:
- 14 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel:

7. שֶׁחָטָא, *i. e.* שָׁחַט, or, as the Keri exhibits the word, שֶׁחָטָא, takes here the active signification of שָׁחַט. See on chap. vi. 27. There is no necessity, with Ewald and some others, to compare the Arab. شَجَز and the Chald. שָׁחַט, and render *sharp*. *Killing, deadly, or murderous*, is the proper signification of the Hebrew, and quite suits the connexion. For the last clause of the verse comp. Hos. vii. 6, and my note there.

9. A frightful, but true picture of a country which has been laid waste by a

hostile army. In גְּבִי נִיחִי is a paronomasia.

11. This is not an inquiry for a wise or prudent man generally; but, as the parallelism shows, for one who has had wisdom given him by prophetic inspiration. Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 15. Wherever any prophet was found, he was to point out the true cause of universal desolation.

11—15. פִּי-נִיחִי, ver. 12, and בֵּן, ver. 14, are related to each other as protasis and apodosis. וְהִנֵּה הֵנָּה, is exegetical of the pronominal suffix to the preceding verb. For מִרְחָשׁ, *poison*, see on chap. viii. 14.

- Behold! I will feed them—namely this people—with wormwood,  
And give them water of poison to drink.
- 15 I will scatter them among the nations,  
Which neither they, nor their fathers have known;  
And I will send the sword after them  
Till I have consumed them.
- 16 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts:  
Consider ye, and call for the female wailers,  
That they may come;  
And send ye for the skilful women,  
That they may come.
- 17 Yea, let them hasten and raise a wailing for us,  
That our eyes may run down with tears,  
And our eyelids gush with water.
- 18 Surely the sound of wailing is heard from Zion,  
How are we destroyed!  
We are greatly ashamed;  
Because we have left the land,  
Because they have thrown down our habitations.
- 19 O ye women! only hear the word of Jehovah,  
And let your ear receive the word of his mouth;  
And teach your daughters wailing,  
And each her companion lamentation.
- 20 For death hath entered our windows,

16. It was customary in the East, as it still is in the present day, for persons, especially females, to make themselves expert in wailing, by committing mournful ditties to memory, and acquiring the use of certain dolorous and piercing shrieks, and to hire themselves on occasion of deaths or funerals, when they heightened the lamentation by indulging in excessive wailings, accompanying them with corresponding signs of immoderate grief, such as dishevelled hair, smiting the breast, beating their faces, throwing dust on the head, &c. Comp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; Eccles. xii. 5; Amos v. 16; Matt. ix. 23; Mark v. 38. The custom obtained also among the Greeks and Romans, and is still practised in semi-barbarous nations. See Blayney on the present passage; and my Comment. on Amos, *ut sup.*

17. <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> with a defective <sup>א</sup> for <sup>אֵל</sup>. We have a similar instance, Ruth i. 14. Many MSS. have the full orthography.

18. The nominative to <sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup> is “the enemies” understood.

19. <sup>וְ</sup> seems here to be evidently employed to excite attention to what follows, and cannot be better rendered into English than by *only*. The number of the dead would be so great, that it would be next to impossible to obtain a sufficiency of persons to engage in the funeral lamentations. Michaelis and Scholz are of opinion, that the mothers were to teach the science of lamentation to their daughters, to be practised by them as a mode of obtaining their livelihood.

20, 21. There is no good ground for the hypothesis, that by <sup>מוֹת</sup> *death*, we are here to understand the plague. It is

It is come into our palaces ;  
Cutting off the children without,  
The youths in the open places.

21 Speak, thus saith Jehovah :

The carcases of men shall fall,  
Like dung, on the surface of the field ;  
And like the handful after the reaper,  
Which no one gathereth up.

22 Thus saith Jehovah :

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,  
Neither let the strong man glory in his strength,  
Let not the rich man glory in his riches ;

23 But let him that glorieth glory in this,

That he understandeth and knoweth me,  
That I am Jehovah,  
Who exercise mercy, justice, and righteousness in the earth ;  
For in these things I delight,  
Saith Jehovah.

24 Behold the days are coming, saith Jehovah,

When I will punish all the circumcised with the uncircumcised :

25 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom,

And the children of Ammon, and Moab,

true this calamity is so designated, chap. xv. 2 ; xliii. 11, where it occurs along with famine and sword ; but there is nothing in the present connexion to warrant the application of the term to any other instrumentality than that of the hostile soldiery ; who, not content with cutting down all whom they found in the streets, made a forcible entrance by the windows of the houses, and put to death all the inmates—having no regard to those of tender age.

22, 23. Neither political wisdom, military power, nor accumulated wealth, would avail any thing as a defence or a means of rescue to the refractory Jews. The confidence placed in them would assuredly fail. Nothing but a sound practical knowledge of the true God, as the righteous and benevolent Governor of the world, could afford any source of comfort in the prospect of the impending calamities. It behoved the Jews

therefore, as it behoves all who are living in a state of rebellion against him, to acquaint themselves with him and be at peace ; Job xxii. 21.

24, 25. The Jews appear, even at this period, to have boasted of the external rite of circumcision. To convince them that it would procure for them no exemption, the prophet is instructed to class them along with the surrounding nations, all of whom were to be chastised by Nebuchadnezzar. Jehovah, who could be satisfied with nothing less than the sincere religion of the heart, would make no difference between them. Egypt is mentioned first, because it was the power in which the Jews were so prone to confide, and against which the expedition of the king of Babylon was specially directed. Interpreters have been not a little puzzled to determine the exact points of contrast and agreement in these verses, and to reconcile the

And all those with narrowed beards,  
Who inhabit the desert ;

opinions respecting the extent to which circumcision anciently obtained. Although it is evident from many passages of Scripture, that the rite was by no means universal among the inhabitants of Western Asia, yet that it was practised by the Egyptians, Colchians, Ethiopians, Phœnicians, Syrians, Troglodytes, &c., is clear from the testimonies of ancient writers, as Herodotus, lib. ii. 36, 104; Diod. Sic. lib. i. cap. 26, 55; lib. iii. cap. 32; Strabo, lib. xvii. Compare Philo De Circumcisione. Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 10, § 2. Contra Apion, lib. i. cap. 22. J. D. Michaelis, Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, Article 185. Kitto *in voc.* It has not only been observed by the Mohammedans as the descendants of Ishmael, but by inhabitants of Africa, who never appear to have had any intercourse either with Jews or Mohammedans. Whether the meaning of the prophet is, that the nations which he specifies were the subjects of the outward rite, but destitute of true religion; or whether it is that the circumcised and the uncircumcised were to be treated alike by Jehovah, without any distinction as to external customs, has been matter of dispute. The decision of the question depends mainly on the construction put upon the words *כִּי בָּצֵרָה*, the acceptance in which the adjective *צָרִים*, ver. 25, is taken, and the spirit of the whole passage. That *כִּי*, the Palul Participle of *כָּרַח*, to cut off, circumcise, signifies one who is circumcised, is allowed by all. It is equally granted, that *צָרִים* signifies *uncircumcision*, or the condition of a person who is uncircumcised. The two terms are regarded as having their equivalents in the *περιτομή* and *ἀκροβυστία* of the N. T. Accordingly *כִּי בָּצֵרָה* has been rendered *the circumcised with the uncircumcised*. But as *צָרִים* is undeniably an abstract noun, signifying uncircumcision, and not *צָר* in the concrete, there is a want of proper concord between the two terms, which compels us to consider the preposition *כִּי* as indicative not of accompaniment, in which acceptance it is seldom

used, but of condition or state. The literal rendering, therefore, is: "every one circumcised in uncircumcision," i. e. every one bearing the mark of the external rite, but still destitute of true religion. The nations specified are represented as circumcised in one sense, and not in another. The Jews themselves formed no exception. As to the heathen nations, *צָרִים*, they were all *צָרִים* in a metaphorical sense, i. e. they were such as the Jews had been taught to regard as *impure*, and consequently, notwithstanding their having had the outward rite performed upon them, were still disqualified from reception into the Jewish commonwealth, since they did not worship the true God, but practised abominable idolatries. And, as to the Jews, how much sorer they might glory over them, and feel confident that, having the name and temple of Jehovah among them, and still worshipping him, notwithstanding their idolatrous propensities, they should escape punishment, yet in heart they were no better than they, and had nothing to expect but the same treatment. Circumcision and uncircumcision of heart, put for moral purity and moral impurity, are modes of speech not uncommon in Scripture. See Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4; Rom. ii. 28, 29; Col. ii. 11. *כִּי בָּצֵרָה קַצְרֵי פִּיָּהּ* cut as to the corners of the beard. *כִּי בָּצֵרָה*, standing for *כִּי בָּצֵרָה*, as in Lev. xix. 27; xxi. 5; where the practice of cutting or shaving the beard at the extremities towards the ears is prohibited. Finding it impossible to give a literal translation, so as to convey a just idea to the reader, I have rendered the original phrase by two equivalent terms, which fully express the sense. It appears from the present passage, and chap. xlix. 32, that the Arabian tribes to the south-east of Palestine observed this custom, so that it had become one of their characteristics. Thus Herodot. lib. iii. cap. 8, speaking of them, says, *τῶν τριχῶν τὴν κορυὴν κείρεσθαι φασί, καθάπερ αὐτὸν τὸν Διόνυσον κεκάρθαι. κείρονται δὲ περιτρόχαλα, περιξυροῦντες τοὺς κρατάρους.*

For all the nations are uncircumcised,  
And all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.

The interpretation of Jarchi and Blayney, which refers the phrase to the insulated geographical position of certain Arabian tribes, is less entitled to regard.

## CHAPTER X.

This chapter forms a separate portion of the book, consisting of two parts, the first of which, ver. 1—16, is addressed to the Hebrews, viewed proleptically as in captivity; and the second, 17—25, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The authenticity of the former is denied by Movers, De Wette and Hitzig, who ascribe it to a writer whom they suppose to have flourished in Babylon during the exile, to whom they also ascribe the composition of the last twenty-six chapters of Isaiah. The grounds on which their hypothesis is founded, are the position of the speaker among his exiled countrymen; the satire with which idolatry is treated, and which so greatly tallies with that employed by Isaiah; and the coincidence of the style and *usus loquendi*. That the writer addresses his people in *exile*, is undeniable, but that he actually lived among them at the time, is more than can be proved. It is more probable that he merely places himself among them for the sake of argument, in accordance with similar relations frequently assumed for the same purpose by the prophets. The coincidence between the manner in which he exposes the folly of idolatry, and that of Isaiah, may be sufficiently accounted for on the principle that he was familiar with the predictions of that writer,—a principle which equally obviates the objection taken from the alleged agreement in linguistical peculiarities. There can be no doubt that chapter xlviii. is mainly borrowed from Isaiah, xv. and xvi. chapters, so that the acquaintance of Jeremiah with the book of that prophet cannot be questioned. But it must be evident to any Hebrew scholar who will be at the pains to compare the passages adduced by Movers, p. 44, that, after all, the alleged coincidence between them is exceedingly slight, and in many cases, purely fanciful.

The Hebrews are warned against Chaldean astrology, 1, 2, and the idolatry connected with it, 3—15; to enforce which, sublime representations of the existence and attributes of the true God are intermingled by way of contrast, ver. 6, 7, 10—13, 16. They are then addressed in reference to the impending calamity, 17, 18; a fresh description of which, with its cause, is added, 19—22; and the chapter concludes with a deprecation of the Divine judgments, and a prayer, that they might be inflicted upon the enemy.



- 1 HEAR ye the word which Jehovah speaketh to you,  
O house of Israel !
- 2 Thus saith Jehovah :  
Learn not the way of the nations,  
Neither be ye terrified at the signs of heaven ;  
Though the nations are terrified at them.
- 3 For the customs of the nations are vanity,  
For they are a tree cut out of the forest,  
The work of the hands of the artificer, with an ax.
- 4 They adorn it with silver, and with gold,  
They fasten it with nails, and with hammers,  
That it may not totter.
- 5 They are like an artificial palm-tree,  
They cannot speak ;  
They must be carried along,  
For they cannot walk :  
Be not afraid of them,  
For they can do no harm,  
Neither can they do any good.
- 6 Nothing whatever is like to Thee, O Jehovah !  
Thou art great, and thy name is great in might.
- 7 Who would not render Thee fear, O King of the nations !  
For Thee it becometh ;

2. The Hebrews, living, as they are supposed to do, in the midst of idolaters, were more or less exposed to their seductive influence. The Chaldeans studied astrology at a very early period, and predicted, from the appearance and position of the planets and other stars, the will of the gods and the destinies of men ; thus determining the influence of certain days as lucky or unlucky ; and interpreting the phenomena of eclipses and comets as indicative of approaching calamities. These they specially employed for the purpose of working on the superstitious fears of mankind. It is against such fears the Israelites are put upon their guard.

3—5. A striking exposure of the stupidity of idolaters in supposing that a piece of a tree cut down, shaped and beautified by their own hands, and utterly

incapable of speech or locomotion, should be possessed of qualities supernatural and divine. There is a peculiar propriety in comparing a wooden idol to the palm-tree, on account of its columnar and immovable appearance. *רָמָה* appears to have had the signification of *raising, setting up, making erect* ; hence *רָמָה*, the palm, on account of its erect aspect, and, as here, *רָמָה*, the palm-like pillar used in architecture. To distinguish the latter from the real palm-tree, it is described as *רָמָה מְעֻשָּׂה*, of *turned work*, what is made round by the labour of the artificer. *מְעֻשָּׂה*, by transposition for *עֻשָּׂה*.

6, 7. The prophet interrupts his description of the folly of idolatry by a beautiful apostrophe addressed to Jehovah, whom he boldly contrasts, both by way of assertion and challenge, with the gods of the heathen. *בְּיָמֶיךָ*, verbally,

For among all the wise men of the nations,  
And in all their kingdoms,  
There is nothing whatever like to Thee.

8 But they are at once brutish and foolish ;

The tree itself is a reproof of vanities.

9 Silver beaten out into plates is brought from Tarshish,  
And gold from Uphaz ;

The work of the artificer,

And of the hands of the smelter ;

Their raiment is blue and purple,

They are all the work of skilful men.

10 But Jehovah is truly God,

*a part or particle of nothing, or no nothing,* denying in the strongest possible manner the existence of what is predicated. The same compound occurs in the repetition, ver. 7, where it is asserted that no object of worship, devised and fashioned by the skill of man, was for a moment to be brought into comparison with Jehovah. The comparison there made is not between the wise men and God, but between the product of their skill, *i.e.* idols and the Most High. The nominative to the verb *יִתְקַדֵּשׁ* is the feminine noun *יִתְקַדֵּשׁ*, fear or reverence, understood from the verb *יִתְקַדֵּשׁ* in the preceding hemistich. *יִתְקַדֵּשׁ* signifies to be *beautiful, decorous, proper, fit, or becoming*, to be suitable to the nature or character of any object. To Jehovah alone it is fit and proper that religious reverence should be paid. Anything of the kind rendered to another is an infringement on his high and exclusive prerogative, besides being in itself in the highest degree unseemly and absurd.

8. So utterly absurd is the worship of idols, that the slightest degree of reflection on the nature of the objects worshipped was calculated to convict the devotees of folly.

9. Every thing connected with idols is the result of human effort. For *טַרְשִׁישׁ*, *Tarshish*, see my Comment. on Isaiah, xxiii. 10. Spain, in which that mart was situated, abounded in ancient times in silver and gold. Heeren says, that

"it was once the richest country in the world for silver ; and that gold and the baser metals were found there in great abundance. The silver mountains were in those parts which the Phœnicians comprised under the name of Tartessus or Tarshish." Idcen, p. 64. Comp. Diod. Sic. lib. v. Strabo, lib. iii. Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. iii. cap. 3. Nothing definite can be determined with respect to *אֹפִיר*, *Uphaz*. Bochart very precariously referred it to Ceylon. It has been thought by some, that *אֹפִיר* is only an incorrect orthography for *אֹפִיר*, the Hophal Participle of *נָפַח*, to *purify*, so that *אֹפִיר מִיָּד* is the same as *אֹפִיר מִיָּד*, *pure gold*, 1 Kings x. 18. Since this, however, does not give so good a sense in the parallelism, since the LXX. in the margin of the Hexaplar Syr., the Syr. Targ., and Theod. all render *Ophir*, and since the name of a place would seem to be required, I concur in the opinion that the word has been originally written *אֹפִיר*, and that some copyist has changed the *ר* into *י* by mistake. It occurs but once besides, and likewise in connexion with gold, *זָהָב מִיָּד*, *gold of Uphaz*, Dan. x. 5. Ewald does not scruple to adopt *Ofir* into his translation.—*אֹפִיר* and *אֹפִיר* are both names of purple colours obtained from species of shell-fish found on the shores of the Mediterranean. The only difference between them is that the former possessed more of a mixture of blue.

10. *אֱמֶת*, *truth*, as characteristic of

He is the living God,  
And the King eternal :  
At his indignation the earth trembleth,  
And the nations cannot endure his wrath.

- 11 [Thus shall ye say to them :  
The gods which have not made the heavens and the earth,  
Shall perish from the earth,  
And from under these heavens.]
- 12 He created the earth by his power,  
He established the world by his wisdom ;  
And by his understanding he stretched forth the heavens.
- 13 When he uttereth his voice  
There is a multitude of waters in the heavens,  
And he causeth vapours to ascend from the extremity of the  
earth ;  
He produceth the lightnings with rain,  
And bringeth out the wind from his stores.
- 14 Every man is brutish without knowledge,  
Every smelter is ashamed of the image ;

Jehovah, finely contrasts with *הָבֵל*, *vanity*, *emptiness*, by which the false deities are described, ver. 3, as, indeed, do his other attributes of life and eternity, with their inanimate and temporary existence.

11. This verse presenting itself abruptly in the Chaldee language, has given rise to considerable speculation. It has usually been supposed, on the authority of the Targum, that the reason why it is in that language, and not in Hebrew, is because it contains the identical words in which the exiles were to couch their reply to the Babylonians when solicited by them to the commission of idolatry. This opinion has been eagerly embraced by those who suppose the writer to have lived during the captivity. What militates against this hypothesis is the anomalous fact, that not only are the words put into the mouths of the Israelites in Chaldee, but also the introductory terms: *כֹּה תאמרו להם*, *thus shall ye say to them*, are in the same language instead of the Hebrew, *כֹּה תאמרו להם*. Taking further into account that the entire verse completely interrupts the argument, I have

no hesitation in acceding to the opinion of Houbigant, Venema, Blayney, Dathe, Döderlein, Rosenmüller, Dahler, Maurer and Ewald, who consider it to be an interpolation of some copyist, or that it was originally a marginal gloss, which has been inadvertently introduced into the text. This interpolation, however, must have taken place at a very early period, since it is found in all the ancient versions. *אֶרֶץ*, *the earth*, a harder form of the Chaldee *אֶרֶץ*, which occurs immediately afterwards in the verse. *אֶרֶץ* is the Hebrew demonstrative plural, instead of the Chaldee *אֶרֶץ*.

12, 13. These verses connect intimately with ver. 10, being a continuation of the sublime description of the true God, which had there been commenced. *לְקוֹל הָהוּא*, *lit. at the voice of his giving forth*, i.e. when he giveth forth his voice, in other words, when he thundereth. See Ps. xxix. The more regular Hebrew would be *לְקוֹל הָהוּא*. There is here an allusion to the very heavy rain which frequently accompanies thunder-storms.

14. A resumption of the exposure of

For that which he has molten is falsehood,  
And there is no breath in them.

15 They are vanity, a work of mockeries;  
At the time of their punishment they shall perish.

16 The portion of Jacob is not such as these,  
For he is the Former of the Universe,  
And Israel is the rod of his inheritance:  
Jehovah of Hosts is his name.

17 Gather up thy packages from the ground,  
O inhabitress of the siege!

18 For thus saith Jehovah:

Behold! I will at this time sling out the inhabitants of the  
land;

And I will bring distress upon them, that they may feel it.

idolatry. Some would render *בְּכֹחַ יְדָיו* *בְּכֹחַ*, Every man is rendered brutish by the result of his skill, viz. the idol which he has made, taking *בְּכֹחַ* and *בְּכֹחַ* to be parallel; but *בְּכֹחַ* following *בְּכֹחַ* cannot be taken causatively.

15. *מִכְצוּצִים*, mockeries, an onomatopoeic, derived from the Pileל *מִכְצוּצִים*, to stammer, stutter, and then to mock, as a stutterer at first sight seems to do the person to whom he addresses himself. Comp. the Arab. *تعتع*, gravitas linguæ, balbuties, sonus ridentis, from *تعتع*, repetitus et indistinctus fuit sermo.

The word is aptly chosen to express the character of idol-worship.—The punishment of the Babylonian idols was their destruction by Cyrus on his conquest of that empire. A similar fate they have everywhere met with, when their worshippers have obtained a better knowledge. Comp. Is. ii. 18.

16. In Scripture language God is said to be *חֵלֶק*, the portion of his people, because he is the source of all-sufficient good to them,—not, as Gesenius interprets, because they were allotted to be his worshippers. The idea is borrowed from *חֵלֶק*, to divide, then to divide for an inheritance. Comp. Numb. xviii. 20; Ps. xvi. 5; cxlii. 6.—*בְּכֹחַ יְדָיו*, lit. the

rod of his inheritance, but which can only mean the people over which he had established his rule, the rod or sceptre being used by metonymy for the government of which it was the badge or sign. Gesenius considers *בְּכֹחַ* here to signify a measuring rod, and to be used metonymically for the portion measured off, the Hebrews being the people which he had selected and marked off for himself in contradistinction from all the nations of the earth. The phrase only occurs besides Ps. lxxiv. 2; Jer. li. 19.—*בְּכֹחַ*, with the article *הַבְּכֹחַ*, must be taken substantively, and rendered the universe, which, although the term sounds somewhat grandiloquent, is necessary to convey the force of the original.

17, 18. The prophet now resumes his address to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and calls upon them to prepare for their migration as captives to Babylon. Whatever movable property they had, they were to collect. The various articles are supposed to be lying about in confusion on the ground during the anticipated siege. As the city was to be taken, the Jews had to lay their account with their being carried away into exile. *סָרְסָרָה*, sarcina, a bundle, luggage, &c., especially what is packed up or bound together to be carried by soldiers or beasts of burden; from *סָרַסַר*, to collect bind together in bundles. Arab. *كنع*,

- 19 Alas ! for me, on account of my breach ;  
My stroke is grievous :  
But I said :  
Surely this is a calamity, and I must bear it.
- 20 My tent is destroyed,  
And all my tent-pins are plucked up :  
My children are gone away from me, and are not ;  
And there is none to spread my tent any more,  
Or to set up my tent-curtains.
- 21 Because the shepherds had become brutish,  
And did not seek Jehovah,  
Therefore they did not prosper,  
And their whole flock was dispersed.
- 22 The sound of a rumour, behold ! it cometh ;  
Even a great tumult from the land of the north ;  
The cities of Judah shall be made desolate,  
A den of jackals.
- 23 I know, O Jehovah ! that the way of man is not his own,  
It is not in man that walketh to direct his going.
- 24 Correct me, O Jehovah ! only with measure ;  
Not in thine anger, lest thou reduce me to nothing.
- 25 Pour out thy fury upon the nations, that know thee not,  
And upon the families that call not on thy name :

*contractus fuit, contraxit in unam.* LXX. *ἰνόςτασις*.—The occurrence of a paragogic ' as in *יִשְׁכָּנִי* is not anomalous, so that the Keri *יִשְׁכָּנִי* is merely a correction for the purpose of giving the regular participial form. See Hos. x. 11, and my note there. *הִנְיָצִי*, the siege, for *הִנְיָצִי*, the besieged city.—The metaphor of the sling is employed to express the violence and suddenness of the removal of the Jews to Babylon. *נִפְּצָה* properly signifies to find, but also to find by experience. This it is impossible to express more tersely than by adopting the verb to feel.

19, 20. In plaintive strains, the prophet puts into the mouth of the Jews, taken collectively, utterances of the most poignant grief at the prospective desolation of their city and land. The declaration, that they must bear their

calamity, is not one of humble submission to or acquiescence in the Divine judgment, but one of sullen and obdurate impenitence. Jerusalem is contemplated as destroyed, and her inhabitants are regarded as led away captive. None were left to restore her. The beautifully metaphorical language is borrowed from nomadic life.

21, 22. The civil rulers are charged with bringing the threatened calamity upon the people, by the idolatrous practices in which they had indulged. The Babylonians by whom the calamity was to be inflicted already approach : it is just at hand !

23—25. Jeremiah here gives vent to his own conviction, in reference to what he beheld in prophetic vision. He acknowledges the directing and controlling influence of Divine Providence in the

For they have devoured Jacob,  
They have devoured him, and consumed him,  
And have made his habitation desolate.

affairs of men, in its special bearing upon the march of the Babylonian monarch. According to the plan of that sovereign, the object of the expedition was, to chastise the Egyptians, who had ventured to approach his empire with the most hostile intentions; but the design of Jehovah was, that he might punish the Jews for their dereliction of Him and his service. We have a striking parallel in the case of the Assyrian invader, Is. x. 5—7. *יָדָי* is certainly in the vocative case, and not in the accusative absolute, as Durell and Blayney take it, and render: "I know Jehovah that his way is not like that of men." The pronominal affix in *יָדָי* *his way* must be referred to "man" and not to "Jehovah." Identifying himself with his people, the prophet deprecates entire destruction, and prays that while the Divine indignation might be inflicted with moderation on them, the full measure of it might be visited upon their enemies. With a few slight variations ver. 25 is found Ps. lxxix. 6, 7, which Psalm is to be referred to the time

of the captivity, except we regard it as prophetic of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which is less probable. In this and similar imperatives, which abound in the Psalms, the form is chosen in preference to the future for the sake of more vivid impression, so that, to say the least, there is as much of prediction as of imprecation, in the passages in which it occurs. In the present instance, the prophet takes it for granted, that God must of necessity punish his enemies, who gratified the wicked propensities of their nature, while they destroyed his temple and people; and therefore prays, that he would not utterly cut off the latter, but that his indignation might take its course upon the former. Both were fulfilled: the Jews as a people were restored; the Babylonians disappeared entirely from the political horizon. There is a paronomasia in *יָדָי* *יָדָי*, which words are undoubtedly genuine, though wanting in one of Kennicott's MSS. and in Ps. lxxix. 7.

## CHAPTER XI.

This and the following chapter form one whole, but at what precise time the discourse contained in them was delivered, cannot be determined. From its general tenor, however, it is evident it must have been subsequent to the reformation effected by Josiah, when the Jewish people had relapsed into their former idolatrous practices. It commences with a brief epitome of the ancient covenant which had been found in the temple in the reign of that pious king, 1—5; then follows an exposure of the continuous rebellion of the Hebrew people, 6—10; a denunciation of wrath is pronounced against them, 11—13; and, to indicate the certainty of its execution, the prophet is forbidden to intercede for them, 14. The inconsistency of their conduct as the professing people of God is denounced, and its punishment threatened, 15—17. The remaining verses, 18—23, contain a prediction of the calamities that should come on the inhabitants of Anathoth, for their conspiracy against Jeremiah.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying :
- 2 Hear ye the words of this covenant,  
And speak ye to the men of Judah,  
And to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- 3 And say thou to them, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel :  
Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant,
- 4 Which I gave in charge to your fathers,  
In the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt,  
From the furnace of iron, saying :  
Obey my voice, and do them,  
According to all that I charge you ;  
So ye shall be my people,  
And I will be your God ;
- 5 That I may confirm the oath, which I swear to your fathers,  
To give them a land flowing with milk and honey,  
As it is this day.  
Then I answered and said :  
Amen, O Jehovah !
- 6 Then Jehovah said to me :  
Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah,  
And in the streets of Jerusalem, saying :  
Hear ye the words of this covenant,  
And do them.

2. The use of the plurals *שמעו* and *אמרו*, shows that others besides the prophet were commissioned to promulge the Divine will to the people of Judah. What they were specially to communicate, was the contents of that portion of the book of the law, which had been found in the temple, containing the denunciations against rebellious Israel, Deut. xxvii. xxviii. In all probability the priests are addressed, on whom it devolved to read the book of the law to the people.

4. *ביום*, *in the day*, is, as frequently, used indefinitely for *when*. The Sinai covenant was made some time after the exodus, but the two events are represented as so important, and so connected, that they might be viewed as running

into one. The plural *אמרו*, *them*, has for its antecedent the words of the covenant, ver. 3. Comp. ver. 6.

5. The concluding words of this verse contain the response of the prophet to his commission,—couched in phrasology borrowed from Deut. xxvii. 26. It was evidently designed to mark his concurrence in the justice of the curses there denounced.

6. It appears from what is here stated, that Jeremiah must have undertaken a prophetic tour throughout Judah, for the purpose of communicating to the inhabitants of the land, the awful import of the denunciations contained in the book of the law, which had been discovered in the temple.

- 7 For I solemnly protested to your fathers,  
In the day when I brought them up from the land of Egypt,  
Even to this day,  
Rising early, and protesting, saying,  
Obey my voice.
- 8 But they obeyed not,  
Neither inclined their ear,  
But walked,  
Each in the obstinacy of his own wicked heart ;  
Therefore I brought upon them  
All the threatenings of this covenant,  
Which I gave them in charge to perform,  
But they performed it not.
- 9 Then Jehovah said to me :  
A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah,  
And among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- 10 They have returned to the iniquities of their forefathers,  
Who refused to hear my words,  
And have followed other gods to serve them ;  
The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the  
covenant,  
Which I made with their fathers.
- 11 Therefore thus saith Jehovah :  
Behold ! I will bring upon them a calamity,  
Which they shall not be able to elude ;  
And though they may cry to me,  
Yet I will not hearken to them.
- 12 Then may the cities of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go,  
And cry to their gods,  
To which they burn incense,

7, 8. The most earnest and assiduous instructions which had been imparted to the Hebrew nation, had all been contravened by their desperate and obstinate wickedness. For וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ see on chap. iii. 17. In וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ there is an ellipsis of אֶת־יְהוָה.

9. The conspiracy to which reference is here made, appears to have been a

compact entered into by those who were hostile to the reformation which Josiah had introduced, whereby they bound themselves to introduce again all the idolatrous practices which had been abolished.

12. The converseive Vau in וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ, connecting this preterite with the preceding future, gives it a future or potential



But they shall afford them no deliverance in the time of their calamity.

- 13 For according to the number of thy cities,  
Were thy gods, O Judah !  
And according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem,  
Ye set up altars to the shameful object,  
Altars at which to burn incense to Baal.
- 14 Therefore thou shalt not pray for this people,  
Nor cause to rise on their behalf a cry or a supplication ;  
For I will not hear in the time when they cry to me,  
On account of their calamity.
- 15 What hath my beloved to do in my house,  
Committing, as she doth, the manifold enormity ?  
And the holy flesh hath passed away from thee ;  
When thou actest wickedly, then thou exultest.

signification. The concluding words of the verse, and those which commence the following, are a repetition of language which the prophet had already employed, chap. ii. 28.

14. The interdict laid upon Jeremiah not to intercede for his guilty people, implies that in the benevolence of his heart he was disposed to make such intercession, and that the irreversibility of the Divine purpose rendered it superfluous. בָּנֵי רָצָח, instead of בָּנֵי רָצָחָם, is found in upwards of twenty-five MSS., some of which are of great antiquity and accuracy, in the Complut. Pol., and in the LXX., Arab., Syr., and Targ. ; yet it is most probably a correction from ver. 12.

15. The Jews had been a people dear to Jehovah above all others, and of this affection he reminds them, to convince them that the judgments with which he threatened them were not to be ascribed to any feeling of arbitrary vindictiveness in Him, but to their own base and wicked ingratitude. Comp. ch. xii. 7. Addicted as they now were to idolatry, they could, with no consistency, frequent his temple. Comp. vii. 10. קִיפֹתָהּ, is the emphatic form of קִיפָה; and הָרָגִים following, though of a different number and gender, is to be taken as expletive of it, in order to exhibit in the strongest

possible manner the enormity of the evil. הַמְרִיבָהּ הָרָגִים is verbally *the enormity, the manifold*, i.e. that which consists in manifold or multiplied acts. As מְרִיבָהּ is feminine only in form, but in reality neuter, it admits of being construed with an adjective in the masculine. That the LXX. have read הָרָגִים for הָרָגִים is clear, from their rendering ἁγνὴ καὶ ἁγνή; but it would be preposterous to adopt such reading simply on this ground. Besides, its adoption would disturb the whole passage, except we were to change יִכְרִי מִלֶּחֶם בִּי יִכְרִי מִלֶּחֶם רָצָחָם into יִכְרִי מִלֶּחֶם רָצָחָם, for which we have no warrant whatever, and which would leave no ground for הָרָגִים following. By the "holy flesh" are doubtless meant the sacrifices, Haggai ii. 12 ; but, polluted as the Jews had rendered themselves by idolatry, it was no longer holy, or acceptable to God. Both they and it were rejected by Jehovah. The difficulty in רָצָחָם, arises out of the circumstance that we should have expected after בִּי a finite verb ; but it may be removed by supplying הָרָגִים: *When thou committest thy wickedness, then thou exultest*. Instead of being humbled when they had been guilty of idolatrous acts, the Jews were elated with unholy joy. There is no necessity for departing from the usual meaning of הָרָג, *to leap, exult*, and, with Maurer, attaching to it that

## 16 Jehovah called thy name

A green olive-tree, of beautifully formed fruit ;  
At the sound of a great tumult, he hath kindled a fire upon it,  
And its branches are broken.

## 17 For Jehovah of Hosts, that planted thee,

Hath denounced calamity upon thee ;  
On account of the wickedness of the house of Israel,  
And of the house of Judah,  
Which they committed against themselves to provoke me to  
anger,

Burning incense to Baal.

## 18 Jehovah hath made me acquainted with it, and I know it ;

Then thou showedst me their doings.

## 19 But I was as a tamed lamb, led to the slaughter,

And knew not that they devised machinations against me,  
saying :

Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,

of the Arab. *علز*, *inquietus, et impatiens* fruit, and interpreting it of the disturbance or inquietude resulting from the infliction of a calamity.

16. The double construct phrase *ה' יצרני* can only properly be rendered by treating *ה'* adverbially, and *יצר* as a participle. By God's calling the Hebrew people by the name here exhibited is meant that he had made them what the name implied. *ה' יצרני* or *ה' יצרני*, which occurs only here and Ezek. i. 24, is derived from *צר*, a root preserved in the Arab. *هبل*, *continue pluit cælum* : comp.

*حل*, *impetum fecit* ; and is synonymous with *רעם*, *commotion, sound, tumult*. Comp. 1 Kings xviii. 41. The LXX. deriving the word from *צר*, render *קר ה' יצרני* by *φωνήν περιτομῆς αὐτῆς*. The tumult was that of the invading army. *צר* is from *צר*, the same as *צר*, to break, the *צ* being changed into *צ*, after the manner of the Aramaic.

17. *ה' יצרני* is here the dative *incommodi*, indicating, that what the people had done, had been to their own injury.

18, 19. The *י* in *ה' יצרני* is redundant. Jeremiah here digresses from his main subject, in order to take special notice of

the attempt which had been plotted upon his life by his own townsmen. It would appear that he had not entertained the slightest suspicion of their intention, and that he must have remained ignorant of it, if it had not been immediately revealed to him by the omniscient Searcher of hearts. Had he been made acquainted with it, as Hitzig thinks, by *ein glückliches Ungefähr*, some fortunate accident, he would not have employed a repetitious form in ascribing it to Jehovah, as he does in this verse. They were so exasperated by his predictions against the nation, that they were determined to put an effectual stop to them by killing him. *קר ה' יצרני* means a lamb that has been tamed so as to be familiar and play with children. One such is commonly to be found in the house of the Arab.—By the tree and its food are meant the prophet and his prophecies. The LXX. render *ἐμβάλωμεν ξύλον εἰς τὸν ἄρτον αὐτοῦ*, *let us throw wood into his bread*, by which it is thought they meant, that the enemies of the prophet intended to poison him by putting poisonous wood into his food. Thus manifestly the Targ. *ה' יצרני כסא דמיתא דמיתא*, *let us cast deadly poison into his food*. *ה' יצרני*, food, is here used in the acceptance of the

- Let us cut him off from the land of the living,  
That his name may no more be mentioned.
- 20 But, O Jehovah of Hosts ! who judgest righteously,  
Who triest the reins and the heart,  
I shall see thy vengeance on them ;  
For to thee have I disclosed my cause.
- 21 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts respecting the men of  
Anathoth, who seek thy life, saying :  
Prophecy not in the name of Jehovah,  
That thou die not by our hand ;
- 22 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
Behold ! I will punish them ;  
The youths shall die by the sword,  
Their sons and their daughters shall die of famine.
- 23 And there shall not be a remnant of them ;  
For I will bring calamity on the men of Anathoth,  
The year of their punishment.

Arab. *اكلى*, *fruit*, i. e. such fruit as serves for food, and refers to what the tree furnishes for the nourishment of mankind,—not its own nutriment, as Blayney strangely interprets. The language of the persecutors is partly identical with that employed by Isaiah in describing the sufferings of the Messiah, chap. liii.

20. It is a great relief to the pious mind, when burdened with a sense of helplessness or danger, to pour out its feelings in prayer to God. The consciousness of integrity, however, is essential to such relief. A persuasion that he would act with strict justice in punishing the enemies of his servant, filled the prophet with a holy satisfaction of soul. He does not even call them his enemies, but regards them as those

of the Master whom he served. Hitzig remarks, that the fact, that the enemies of the Divine word would be punished, entered so essentially into the sphere of prophetic conviction, that Jeremiah does not exchange the wish of his heart for an utterance of Divine inspiration. Comp. Ps. xxxvii. 34 ; liv. 9 ; cxii. 8 ; cxviii. 7.

21. We learn from this verse, that the inhabitants of Anathoth would have been satisfied if Jeremiah had desisted from giving utterance to his disastrous predictions ; but, finding him resolute in the faithful discharge of his office, they resolved to kill him.

22, 23. *ver. 22*, is a resumption of the same particle, *ver. 21*. The retribution of their intended murder of the prophet was to be in kind. Their extermination would be complete.

## CHAPTER XII.

The subject with which the preceding chapter concludes, is here continued. Staggered at the prosperity of the wicked, with whose obstinacy he had to contend, the prophet expostulates with Jehovah, 1—4 ; in reply to which expostulation he is told, that he will have still more severe trials to endure, and some of them

from his own relatives, 5, 6. Jehovah declares, however, that the heaviest judgments would be inflicted on his faithless people, 7—13. The remaining verses, 14—17, contain a prophecy against the nations contiguous to Judea, that should co-operate with the Chaldeans in attacking the Jews, with a promise of restoration in case of repentance.

- 1 THOU art righteous, O Jehovah ! yet let me plead with thee,  
Let me only speak with thee on matters of judgment ;  
Why doth the way of the wicked prosper ?  
Why do the notoriously faithless live at ease ?
- 2 Thou hast planted them, they have also taken root,  
They have grown and produced fruit ;  
Thou art near in their mouth,  
But far from their reins.
- 3 But thou, O Jehovah ! knowest me,  
Thou seest me, and triest my heart with thee ;  
Pull them out as sheep for the slaughter,  
Separate them for the day of slaughter.
- 4 How long shall the land mourn,  
And the grass of the whole country wither,  
On account of the wickedness of those who inhabit it ?  
The beasts are consumed and the birds,  
Because they said :  
None shall see our end.

1. However difficult Jeremiah found it to reconcile the apparent discrepancies of the Divine government, he still held fast his conviction of the rectitude of the character of Jehovah. With a holy and respectful boldness he proceeds to state the principal cause of his perplexity—the worldly prosperity of the ungodly. Comp. Ps. xxxvii. lxxiii. The Futures in this verse are used optatively. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ, the participle, with a noun derived from the same root for the sake of emphasis.

2. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ is expressive of motion or progress in any way. Here it is metaphorically used of the growth of a tree. The prophet exposes the hypocrisy of those who professed to serve Jehovah, and yet were attached to idolatry.

3. The conscious sincerity of Jeremiah formed a perfect contrast to the hypo-

crisy of his countrymen. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ, to tear, or *pull away by violence*, expresses the force that would be employed to detach the Jews from their abodes. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ is used in its primary acceptation of *separating*, setting apart, devoting.

4. By a common personification the ground is represented as affected by the wickedness of those who dwell upon it. There is here, perhaps, a slight anticipation of the description of the drought of which the prophet treats, chap. xiv. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ, in the singular, presents no difficulty, as, according to rule, plurals which designate beasts or things, admit of being construed with the feminine singular. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ, I take to be impersonal: *No one shall see our end*; i. e. it shall not be realised, we shall not be destroyed. The worldly Jews flattered themselves

- 5 If when thou runnest with footmen they weary thee,  
How wilt thou contend with horsemen ?  
And if in the land of peace thou art secure,  
How wilt thou do in the pride of Jordan ?
- 6 For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father,  
Even they are unfaithful to thee,  
Even they cry loudly after thee ;  
Believe them not, though they speak fair things to thee.
- 7 I have forsaken my house,  
I have abandoned mine inheritance,  
I have delivered the beloved of my soul  
Into the hand of her enemies.

that they might securely pursue their ungodly course, disbelieving all the predictions of calamity uttered by the prophet. The LXX., reading וַיִּתְּנֵם instead of וַיִּתְּנֵם, render: *οὐκ ὀφείλου ὁ Θεὸς ὁδοῦς ἡμῶν*.

5, 6. Jehovah here replies to the appeals of Jeremiah, by an argument *a minori ad majus*. The language is proverbial, and easy of comprehension. The only phrase which requires explanation is וַיִּתְּנֵם, *the pride of Jordan*. By some it is interpreted of the swelling of that river in April and May, when it overflows its lower banks, and fills to a considerable extent the valley called the Ghor; by others, of the trees, shrubs, and rank vegetation which abound on its banks, especially between the Sea of Tiberias and the Lake Merom, and afford a shelter for wild boars, lions, bears and tigers. Comp. ch. xlix. 19; i. 44; Zech. xi. 3. The latter is the preferable interpretation, on the ground of the greater consistency of the contrast between the security enjoyed in the open champaign country, and the danger to which persons are exposed who venture into the haunts of wild beasts. The emphasis attaching to the particle עַתָּה, *even*, and the repeated וְהֵם, *even they*, show that the parabolical language employed in verse 5, is applied in verse 6 to the circumstances in which the prophet was placed among the inhabitants of Jerusalem generally, and his own relatives in particular. Hitherto he had met with no personal injury on the part of the former, how

grating soever his predictions must have been to them; but now at Anathoth, which ought to have been the residence of holy priests of Jehovah, he was to be exposed to such persecution as priests in every age have been forward to originate and sustain; the result of which would be open persecution on the part both of the rulers and the people. See chapters xx. xxvi. His own relatives, however they might hide their real character under specious pretensions of friendship, were ready, like the wild beasts in the covert afforded by the luxuriant vegetation on the Jordan, to rush upon him, and excite, by their loud condemnation of him, the inhabitants of the metropolis to put him to death. A man's worst foes are sometimes those of his own family. Matt. x. 36; Mark xiii. 12. — וַיִּתְּנֵם in ver. 5, Gesenius makes to belong to the conjugation Tiphil, which is only an analogous form of Hiphil; but Lee and Ewald deny that there is any such species of conjugation, and by altering the punctuation to וַיִּתְּנֵם, make it the regular form of Hithpacl. Thus the word is pointed in the second Königsberg MS., and originally in one of De Rossi's. Comp. וַיִּתְּנֵם, chap. xxii. 15. Root וַיִּתְּנֵם, *to burn, be hot*; Hithpacl, *to show oneself hot, be eager*; with וַיִּתְּנֵם, *to contend with*. — וַיִּתְּנֵם, *fully, i. e. with full voice, loudly*.

7. Notwithstanding the propriety which Jehovah had in the temple, the land, and the people of the Jews, he would abandon them all on account of the idolatry with which they were infected. The

- 8 Mine inheritance is become to me  
As a lion in the forest ;  
It uttereth its voice against me,  
Therefore I hate it.
- 9 Is mine inheritance to me a speckled bird of prey ?  
Are birds of prey round about her ?  
Come, gather all the beasts of the field,  
Bring them to the prey.
- 10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard,  
They have trampled down my portion,

Preterites throughout this portion, comprising verses 7—13, are all prophetic Futures, so that its composition is not to be referred, with Dahler, Hitzig and others, to the time of Jehoiakim. For לִי הָיָה, comp. chap. xi. 15.

8. כִּי לִי הָיָה is equivalent to כִּי לִי הָיָה.

9. Most of the moderns agree with Bochart in rendering לִי הָיָה by *wild beast*, a signification which nowhere else attaches to the word, though it occurs elsewhere eight times in Scripture, and always in the acceptation of *bird of prey*. Such a departure from fixed philological principles never could have taken place, if לִי הָיָה, which has been supposed to signify the *hyæna*, had not occurred in immediate connexion with the term. That the Arab.

ضبع signifies the hyæna is undeniable, and the LXX., identifying the Hebrew word with it, render *ύαυα*; but such a construction as *the wild beast hyæna*, however well it may sound in English, is altogether alien to the Hebrew; and this the LXX. must have felt, for they attribute to לִי הָיָה quite a different signification, *Μή στήλαιον ύαυης ή αληγορομία μιν έμοι*; though they otherwise translate it by *περτωριον* and *απερωρ*. That the words are to be read interrogatively, both the LXX. and the punctists agree; the Patach under לִי forming no exception to the rule which requires Kametz with the Article before the guttural ל. If we were to regard לִי הָיָה as an instance of asyndeton, and adopt the above Arabic derivation, the words might be rendered: Is mine inheritance become a bird of prey, or a hyæna to me? And this

would seem to derive support from לִי הָיָה הַבְּרִיָּה, *the wild beast*, occurring in the following sentence; but I prefer considering לִי הָיָה as an adjective qualifying לִי הָיָה, with the acceptation *speckled*, as denoting the variegated colours of certain species of birds of prey, such as the eagle, the falcon, &c. Thus the Syr., Vulg., our common version, Luther's, the Dutch, and others. Thus also recently Ewald: *ein bunter Geier*. The derivation from לִי הָיָה, *to tinge, dye, colour*, is quite natural. With respect to the interrogations, they are both to be answered in the affirmative. The Jews had become like the heathen nations—differing from them only in combining a vain observance of Mosaic rites with those which they had adopted from paganism, and thus presenting a motley appearance. And the nations around were ready, like birds of prey, to pounce upon them, and destroy them as a nation. With these, other rapacious enemies are summoned to unite in rushing to the prey. Comp. Is. xviii. 6; lvi. 9.

10—13. The לִי הָיָה, *many shepherds*, were the Babylonians, whose armies would spread over the land, and reduce it to a state of utter ruin. This is most forcibly expressed, partly by a variety, and partly by a repetition of terms. The devastation was to be universal. The past tense, as the prophetic future, is used throughout. For לִי הָיָה, *my portion*, ver. 10, fifteen MSS. originally five more, and two by correction, read לִי הָיָה, *mine inheritance*; but the former reading is required to bear out the following לִי הָיָה, *my delightful portion*.—The feminine suffix in לִי הָיָה, ver. 11, refers to לִי הָיָה,

They have converted my delightful portion  
Into a desolate wilderness.

- 11 They have made it desolate ;  
Desolate, it mourneth to me ;  
The whole land is desolated,  
Yet no man layeth it to heart.
- 12 On all the high places in the desert,  
The destroyers are come ;  
For the sword of Jehovah devoureth,  
From the one end of the land to the other ;  
No flesh hath peace.
- 13 They have sown wheat,  
But they shall reap thorns ;  
They have put themselves to pain,  
But they shall have no profit ;  
They shall be ashamed of your produce,  
Because of the fierce anger of Jehovah.
- 14 Thus saith Jehovah  
Against all my wicked neighbours,  
Who touch the inheritance  
Which I have caused my people Israel to inherit ;  
Behold ! I will pluck them out from their land,  
And pluck out the house of Judah from among them.
- 15 And it shall come to pass  
After I have plucked them out,  
I will again show them pity, and bring them back,

ver. 10; and the verb, which is of the singular number, is to be taken as a collective, and may, therefore, be translated in the plural. In עָרְבָהּ, ver. 13, there is a change of person from the third to the second, which may have arisen from some copyist having written עָרְבָהּ for עָרְבָהּ; or the mind of the prophet may have had a special direction given to it, at the close of the prediction. The LXX. have ἐμὴν. † 14—17. Here commences a separate prophecy respecting those nations in the vicinity of the Jews, which rejoiced in and helped forward their calamities. These were the Syrians, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Idumeans, the Philistines, &c. What is here delivered is

merely a brief anticipation of the predictions contained in chapters xlvii. xlviii. xlix. On the restoration of those nations, which is declared to be conditional on their embracing the true religion, they were to exchange places with the Jews. The latter were now "in the midst of them," and were to be removed from that position before their subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar; but on their restoration, they were to be established "in the midst" of the Jews, which shows that the prophecy is to be interpreted of the proselytes from among them that would join the church of God after the restoration from Babylon. נִפְחָל signifies in Niphal, to obtain a fixed abode, and

Each to his inheritance, and each to his land.

- 16 And it shall come to pass,  
If they will diligently learn the ways of my people,  
To swear by my name : Jehovah liveth !  
As they taught my people to swear by Baal,  
Then they shall be built amongst my people.
- 17 But if they will not hear,  
Then I will pluck out that nation,  
I will pluck it out and destroy it,  
Saith Jehovah.

by implication, *to be prosperous, happy*. Without anticipating remarks which will be found in the Commentary on the chapters above referred to, it may be noticed with respect to the accomplishment of the prophecy, that it is generally believed, it took place during the thirteen years that the Babylonians were occupied with the siege of Tyre. Josephus states expressly, that after the subjugation of

Cœlosyria, the Eastern monarch made war against the Ammonites and Moabites, and when he had brought *all those nations* under subjection, he fell upon Egypt, &c. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 9. § 7.—The embracing of the true religion is represented as consisting in an avowal, with all the solemnity of an oath, that Jehovah alone was God. Comp. Is. xix. 18; lxxv. 16; Jer. iv. 2.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Under the symbol of a girdle which Jeremiah was first to wear, and then to deposit in the fissure of a rock, and after a long period to recover, are represented the close alliance into which the Hebrew nation had been brought with Jehovah, and the design of that alliance, and the pollution which they had contracted by idolatry, 1—7. Then follows an explanation of the symbol, 8—11. Next comes another symbol of bottles of wine, 12, which is likewise explained, 13, 14. A previous warning is given to the people generally, 15—17; the royal personages are foretold the humiliation which awaits them, 18; the capture of the land by the Chaldeans is depicted, and its cause assigned, 19—22; and the prophecy closes with a description of the incorrigible character of the Jews, their abominable idolatries, and a denunciation of their punishment, 23—27.

- 1 THUS saith Jehovah to me : Go and procure for thyself a linen girdle, and put it on thy loins, but thou shalt not put it in

1. The first seven verses of this chapter contain an apt example of symbolical prophecy. But that it was purely allegorical, *i.e.* that nothing of what is

described actually occurred in the outward history of Jeremiah, cannot be admitted. The whole is couched in the style of historical facts. Comp. Is. vii. 3 ;



- 2 water. So I procured the girdle according to the word of  
 Jehovah ; and I put it on my loins.  
 3 And the word of Jehovah was communicated to me a second  
 4 time, saying : Take the girdle which thou hast procured,  
 which is on thy loins, and rise, go to Phrath, and hide it there  
 5 in a cleft of the rock. And I went and hid it in Phrath, as

viii. 1; Jer. xviii. 1—4; xix.; Ezek. iv. v. xii. xxiv. 1, 2. The only difficulty which the case before us presents, is the distance of more than two hundred miles, to which, it is supposed, the prophet had to go at two different times, which would necessarily occasion a long interruption of his official duty at Jerusalem. Considering, however, the particular juncture at which he was first called to proceed on his journey—*viz.* when a plot had been formed against his life; and the publicity which would be given to the symbolical character of the transactions, it has been thought that there is a sufficient degree of importance attaching to these circumstances to justify his long absence from his post. But see on ver. 4.—אָרֶזֶם, *a girdle of flax, or cotton*, the material so called from אָרֶזֶם or אָרֶזֶם, Arab. *فَس*, *to card, or*

*shake up cotton*. The command not to put this girdle into water, is construed by Maurer and Hitzig to mean, that Jeremiah was to wear it constantly, though full of the effects of perspiration, and never to wash it: thereby indicating that the Jewish people, whom Jehovah had bound to himself as a valuable girdle, were, as a nation now polluted by idolatrous abominations, to be removed to Babylon, ver. 10.

3, 4. After wearing the new girdle for a time in the sight of the people, the prophet received a fresh order to go to פְּרָת, *Phrath*, and hide it there in the hole of a rock. On the authority of the LXX., Vulg., and other ancient versions, it has been taken for granted, that by פְּרָת here the river *Euphrates* is to be understood. That the name is elsewhere employed to designate that river, is beyond dispute. Not reckoning the present verse, it occurs fifteen times with this application; but except in three in-

stances, Gen. ii. 14, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, Jer. li. 63, it never stands alone, but always has נָהָר, *river*, attached to it. Indeed, the same must have taken place, Gen. ii. 14, if that word had not been used immediately before נָהָר, so that this passage ought not to be taken into the account. With respect to Jer. li. 63, also, there was no necessity for employing the qualifying noun, as Seraiah is supposed to be at Babylon at the time to which reference is there made: consequently in the closest contact with the Euphrates. It seems not a little strange, therefore, that the name should appear not fewer than four times in the present verse without the use of the qualifying term, if that river had really been intended. This circumstance appears to have struck the LXX., whose text, ver. 7, exhibits τὸν Εὐφράτην ποταμὸν. Ewald, who rejects the Euphrates, renders the word by *Flussufer* (*bank of the river*), and thinks that it may be used of fresh or sweet water rivers generally, or that it may express the same as the

Arab. *فُرْصَة*, a rent in the land formed by water. I prefer the solution proposed by Bochart, and adopted by Venema, Dathe, and Hitzig, that פְּרָת is here only an abbreviation of פְּרָתָה, *Ephrath*, which appears to have been the original name of Bethlehem and its vicinity, and most commonly appears with the addition of the paragogic ה, פְּרָתָה, *Ephratha*. The aphæresis of the prosthetic א in Hebrew is not without examples, as אֶרֶץ for אֶרֶצוֹ ; אֶרֶץ for אֶרֶץ, &c. The whole extent of the prophet's journey, therefore, was only about six miles southward of Jerusalem. There at Bethlehem, he was to hide the girdle in a fissure of אֶבֶן, *the rock*, some well-known rock in the vicinity of that town. Why he was specially sent to that place it is impossible

- 6 Jehovah had charged me. And it came to pass at the end of many days, that Jehovah said to me : Rise, go to Phrath, and take thence the girdle, which I charged thee to hide there.
- 7 And I went to Phrath, and dug, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it ; and behold ! the girdle was
- 8 spoiled ; it was good for nothing. Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to me, saying :
- 9 Thus saith Jehovah :  
In this manner I will spoil the pride of Judah,  
And the great pride of Jerusalem.
- 10 This wicked people who refuse to hear my words,  
Who walk in the obstinacy of their heart,  
And follow other gods,  
To serve them, and to worship them,  
They shall even be as this girdle,  
Which is good for nothing.
- 11 For as the girdle cleaves to the loins of a man,  
So did I cause to cleave to me,  
The whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah,  
Saith Jehovah,  
To be to me for a people,  
And for a name, and for praise, and for beauty ;  
But they would not hear.
- 12 Speak further to them this word,  
Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel :  
Every bottle shall be filled with wine ;  
And they shall say to thee,  
Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine ?

to say, except that it may have been that the use of the term *Phrath*, might lead the Jews, when the symbolical actions came to be understood by them, to think of the *Euphrates*, to which they were to be carried captive, as designated by the same name.

6, 7. The length of time implied in *many days*, was required to afford room for the girdle to become spoiled and unfit for use. To that condition the Jews had been reduced by the corrupting idolatries of the heathen. They

had disqualified themselves for acting as witnesses for Jehovah as the only true God, and, like a cast-away girdle, they were to be humbled and rejected.

10, 11. In these verses the symbol is explained by its express application to the whole Hebrew people.

12. Simple as the apparently proverbial statement is, that every bottle should be full of wine, it becomes invested with tremendous import, when, in the following verse, it is interpreted of the wrath of Jehovah, which was

- 13 Then thou shalt say to them,  
 Thus saith Jehovah :  
 Behold ! I will fill all the inhabitants of this land,  
 Even the kings who sit for David on his throne,  
 And the priests and the prophets,  
 And all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness.
- 14 I will dash them, one against another,  
 The fathers and the children together,  
 Saith Jehovah ;  
 I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy,  
 So as not to destroy them.
- 15 Hear ye, and give ear ; be not proud ;  
 For Jehovah hath spoken.
- 16 Give glory to Jehovah your God,  
 Before he cause darkness,  
 And before your feet stumble upon the gloomy mountains ;  
 And ye look for light,  
 But he turneth it into deathshade,  
 He maketh it thick darkness.
- 17 But if ye will not hear,  
 My soul shall weep in secret places for your pride ;

about to be inflicted upon the apostate Jews. Jehovah is often said metaphorically to make the nations intoxicated with wine, when, by his judgments, he stupifies them, deprives them of all power of resistance or defence, and involves them in remediless destruction. See my Comm. on Is. li. 17, and the passages there quoted. The Jews either did not, or pretended not to know, to what the prophet referred, and responded by adverting to the fact with which every one was acquainted, that, after the vintage, the wine was preserved in leathern bottles. These bottles are frequently of a large size. On entering the city of Tiflis in 1821, the author found the market-place full of such bottles, consisting of the skins of oxen, calves, &c., distended with wine, the parts at which the head and legs had been cut off having been closely sewed up, so as not to allow the liquor to ooze out. It is from this custom that our English

word *hogshead* is derived—that term being evidently a corrupt pronunciation of *ox-hide*.

13, 14. Though דִּכְרֵם, *drunkenness*, the object of נִכְרַם, is removed from it by the intervention of not fewer than nineteen words—an example to which I know no parallel in the Hebrew Bible—still it derives much force from its position at the close of the sentence. The Jews, without regard to rank, office, or position, were all to be involved in one common ruin. They were to be dispersed indiscriminately, and without pity. The ל in נִכְרַם is used in the acception *loco*, in the room of, for. Comp. chap. xxii. 4. The form expresses the succession of the Davidic family.

15—17. An affecting appeal to the people to avert, by repentance and confession of sin, the awful judgments which were impending. The phrase נָתַן כְּבוֹד לַיהוָה, *to give glory to Jehovah*, when used in reference to such as had incurred

And mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears ;  
For the flock of Jehovah is taken away captive.

- 18 Say to the king and to the lady,  
Sit down low ;  
For from your heads shall come down  
Your beauteous crown.
- 19 The cities of the south are shut up,  
And no one openeth them ;  
Judah is all taken away captive—  
She is taken away completely.
- 20 Lift up your eyes and look,  
They are coming from the north ;

guilt, means to acknowledge the justice of God in the infliction of deserved punishment. Josh. vii. 19. They were on the point of being involved in most distressing circumstances, in which no hope could procure them relief. יור is here, and Job xxxvi. 32, construed as a feminine. The metaphor is taken from the dangers to which travellers are exposed, who, in a dark and stormy night, cross mountain-regions, where they are liable at almost every step to stumble against some projecting angle of a rock, and so be precipitated into the abyss below. יור, which the Keri changes into יור, should be pointed יור. — יור, *pride*, contracted for יור. Job xxxiii. 17. The 17th verse contains touching expressions of tender, though hopeless grief, on the part of the prophet. For the flock of Jehovah, see Ps. lxxx. 1 ; c. 3 ; Is. xl. 11 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 6, 8, 10—19, 31.

18. The king here specially referred to was Jehoiachin, and the יור, *lady*, or *mistress*, was Nehushta, his mother, who, with his wives, officers, and mighty men, was carried away with him captive to Babylon. 2 Kings xxiv. 8—15. For the appropriation of this term to the queen-dowager, see 1 Kings xi. 19 ; xv. 13 ; 2 Kings x. 13 ; Jer. xxix. 2. Of the two imperatives, יור, the former is to be taken adverbially. The gender of יור not having been regarded when the prophet wrote יור, the masculine, as the ground form of the verb, is employed instead of the feminine. The יור in יור should be pointed יור, and

so taken as the preposition, and not as formative. Comp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 12. The meaning of the verse is not, that they were to humble themselves, and so prevent the calamity—that was now regarded as hopeless,—but to occupy the lowly place to which their altered circumstances would reduce them.

19. By “the cities of the South” are not meant those of Egypt, as Grotius interprets, though יור, *the South*, has this signification, Is. xxx. 6, Dan. xi. 5, &c. ; but those in the south of Judah, or the southern district of Palestine. Even those cities which lay furthest from the approaching enemy, are represented as entirely deserted : the inhabitants having all been carried away into captivity, and not so much as one left to open the gates to the traveller. The following clauses of the verse demand this interpretation, though יור is elsewhere used in the passive, to describe the state of a city surrounded by a besieging enemy. See Josh. vi. 1. יור is the rare form of the third person singular feminine, but the regular form in the Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic. Comp. יור, Deut. xxxii. 36. יור is used adverbially, like יור.

20. Many MSS. and printed editions support the Keri in reading the two imperatives in the second plural ; but יור and יור, in the singular feminine, are required by the feminine suffixes in יור and יור, and by the continuation of the same gender in the two following verses. In adopting יור, the masculine plural, instead of יור, the feminine singular,

- Where is the flock that was given to thee,  
 Thy beautiful flock ?
- 21 What wilt thou say when He shall punish thee ?  
 For thou hast taught them to be chief princes over thee ;  
 Shall not pains seize thee as a woman in travail ?
- 22 And if thou shalt say in thine heart,  
 Why have these things happened to me ?  
 For the greatness of thine iniquity thy skirts are thrown up,  
 Thy heels are treated with violence.
- 23 Shall the Cushite change his skin ?  
 Or the leopard his spots ?  
 Then shall ye also be able to do good,  
 Who are accustomed to do evil.

the prophet drops the figurative, and employs the literal in reference to the inhabitants. For a similar change compare *לָקַח* Micah i. 11. Jerusalem, or the daughter of Zion, is addressed, and called first to observe the army of Nebuchadnezzar approaching from the north, and then to inquire after her inhabitants and the inhabitants of Judea, over which she had ruled, but which were now no more to be found. So sudden was to be the conquest, and the removal of the people into captivity.

21. The nominative to *לָקַח* is *לָקַח*, understood. *לָקַח*, to visit upon, means to bring punishment upon, to punish. The Jews were to be thus visited by the Chaldeans as instruments in the hand of Jehovah. The Vau in *לָקַח* has the force of *since* or *for*. The words *לָקַח* have been variously rendered, principally owing to the occurrence of *לָקַח* at the end of the sentence. Taken in immediate connexion with the preceding word, the construction will be *princes as to headship: i.e.* chief or ruling princes. By *לָקַח*, them, the Chaldeans are intended. The unhallowed alliances which the Jews had contracted at different times with the king of Babylon proved a source of great annoyance to them, and ultimately brought destruction upon them. They had rendered themselves more conspicuous by such alliances, and thereby attracted the notice of that monarch who, in order to

rid himself of the inconvenience of having them as a powerful state between Babylon and Egypt, determined to annihilate them.—*לָקַח* is a rare form of the infinitive, for *לָקַח*. Compare *לָקַח*, Is. xxxvii. 3. Some improperly consider it to be a contracted form of the participle *לָקַח*. It is used substantively, as *לָקַח*, Is. xi. 9.

22. *לָקַח* connects intimately with *לָקַח* at the commencement of the preceding verse. *לָקַח* is here used as a participle of time. The reason why the heels are particularly mentioned, seems to be that the sandal was fastened by a strap or thong which came round above the heel to the instep. As the sandal was not so easily removed as the skirt was turned up, hence the appropriate selection of the verb *לָקַח*, to tear off, or do anything with violence. Both parts of the description literally apply to the treatment of those who were removed into a state of expatriation by a victorious army.

23. That by *לָקַח*, Cushite here, an inhabitant of Ethiopia, is meant, and not one of Arabia, is evident from the fact, that the Arabs are not so swarthy in comparison with the inhabitants of Palestine as to render a reference to their colour appropriate, whereas nothing could have been more so than a reference to the inhabitants of Abyssinia or the African Cush. Inveterate habits are justly regarded as a second nature; but being moral in their character, instead of

- 24 Therefore I will scatter them as the stubble,  
That passeth away before the wind of the desert.
- 25 This is thy lot, thy measured portion from me,  
Saith Jehovah :  
Because thou hast forgotten me,  
And hast confided in vanity ;
- 26 I also will throw up thy skirts over thy face,  
So that thy shame shall appear.
- 27 Thine adulteries, and thy neighings,  
The enormity of thy lewdness,  
On the hills in the fields ;  
I have seen thine abominations :  
Wo to thee, O Jerusalem !  
Thou wilt not be cleansed !  
After how long shall it yet be ?

extenuating, they aggravate the guilt of those who are the subjects of them. Strong, therefore, as is the physical reference here made, it can with no propriety be employed in support of the physical impossibility of moral reformation.

24. The *ו* in *עָרָה* is illative. There being no hope of improvement, nothing remained for the Jews but punishment. To give greater force to the threatening, there is a change of the second person into the third, and also of the feminine into the masculine—a figure not uncommon in the Hebrew prophets. The use, also, of the plural, instead of the singular, which is employed in the preceding and following context, is not without effect.

25. *מִדְּמֹנֶיךָ*, lit. *the portion of thy measurements*, or *measures* ; i.e. which I have measured out to thee. Hitzig renders : *thy garment*, and refers in illustration to Ruth iii. 15, where the verb *מָדַד* is used for the measuring of the barley into the mantle of Ruth ; but as

the noun is here parallel with *לֹט*, *the lot*, which was specially employed in determining portions of land, it seems preferable to explain it of such measurements.

26, 27. In allusion to an ancient mode of punishing prostitutes, Jehovah declares he would expose the idolatrous Jews to the contempt of other nations. Their punishment should correspond to their crime. As their wicked practices had not only been carried on in private, but in the most conspicuous localities, so the Divine judgments should be inflicted in the most open manner. The strength of their propensity to indulge in the worship of idols could only be fitly described in language properly applicable to the expression of libidinous desire in horses. Comp. chap. v. 8. The concluding words of the chapter : *מִדְּמֹנֶיךָ אַחֲרַיִם*, *after how long yet*, are elliptical, and are to be supplied from the preceding sentence, in which *אֵי* is not to be regarded as having the force of an interrogative, but is simply negative.

## CHAPTER XIV.

The occasion on which this portion of the Book, consisting of the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, was delivered is stated to have been a severe drought with which the land of Judah had been visited, 1. The effects of this drought are first depicted in the most vivid colours, 2—6; the prophet then puts into the mouth of the people a confession of sins and expostulatory supplications, 7—9; which are followed by declarations on the part of Jehovah, that the judgment under which they were suffering was loudly called for by the wickedness of their conduct, and that, therefore, no intercession of the prophet, nor ceremonial observances engaged in by them, would avert their merited punishment, 10—12. The doom of the false prophets is next predicted, 13—15, together with that of those who listened to them, 16. On this the prophet is charged to bewail the sufferings of his people, 17, 18; and they are again introduced expostulating with Jehovah, 19; confessing their sins, 20; and supplicating forgiveness, with an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the only source of hope, 21, 22.

- 1 THAT which was the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah concerning the drought :
- 2 Judah mourneth,  
And her gates lament,  
They bow mourning towards the earth :  
The cry of Jerusalem is gone up.
- 3 Their nobles send their inferiors for water,

1. The construction **אֲשֶׁר הָיָה דְּבַר יְהוָה אֵלַי** instead of **דְּבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הָיָה אֵלַי** occurs here for the first time in the Hebrew Scriptures; but that it is not to be considered as the result of carelessness in transcription, but is characteristic of the style of Jeremiah, appears from his again using it, chap. xlv. 1; xlvii. 1; xlix. 34. The literal rendering is, "*That which* was the word of Jehovah." **בְּצָרָה** properly signifies *restraint*. It occurs only chap. xvii. 8, and is here used in the plural **הַבְּצָרוֹת**, *the restraints*, to indicate intensity or continuance. In Deut. xi. 17, the verb **בָּצַר**, *to restrain*, or *shut up*, i.e. **הַשָּׁמַיִם**, *the heavens*, is used in reference to the same subject. That the substantive **קָצֵר**, *rain*, is to be understood, the LXX. who render *ἀσποξία*, have rightly perceived. Comp. again Deut. xi. 17. Of the

severity of the drought, the following verses contain a graphic and pathetic description. It is strange that so judicious an interpreter as Hävernick should dissent from the generally received opinion, according to which a real drought is here referred to.

2. *Gates*, by synecdoche for the persons assembling in them, as they were the principal places of concourse connected with the cities. For an amplified specimen of the lugubrious language here employed, see Is. xxiv. 4. **לְמַעַן** denotes direction or position. It gives a pregnancy to the preceding verb, which must be translated accordingly. For **צִוְחָה**, *a cry of distress*, comp. Is. xxiv. 11.

3. **בְּצָרָה**, or **בְּצִוְחָה**, signifies *to be little*, or *inferior*, both in regard to age and station. Our translators less aptly take the word

They come to the cisterns, but find no water,  
 They return with their vessels empty ;  
 They are ashamed and confounded,  
 And cover their heads.

- 4 Because the ground is chapt,  
 There being no rain on the earth,  
 The husbandmen are ashamed  
 And cover their heads.
- 5 Yea, the hind also in the field  
 Bringeth forth her young, and leaveth it ;  
 Because there is no grass.
- 6 And the wild asses stand on the high places,  
 They snuff up the wind like jackals ;  
 Their eyes fail, because there is no herbage.
- 7 Though our iniquities testify against us,  
 O Jehovah ! act for thine own name's sake ;  
 For our apostasies are numerous,  
 We have sinned against thee.
- 8 O thou Hope of Israel !

in the former acception, and represent the children of the nobles as going to draw water, whereas all that is meant is their domestics. *בְּרִים*, *cisterns*, were pits or cavities filled with rain water ; they are often met with in eastern countries, and are invaluable where there are no springs or streams of water. Their failure is regarded as the greatest calamity. For *לֵב*, fourteen MSS., originally thre more, one by correction, the Soncin. Bible and Prophets, the LXX., Targ., and Syr., read *לֵב*. Though the words *וְיָחִיד וְיָחִיד* are not found in the LXX., it is not necessary, with Movers and Hitzig, to suppose that they have been introduced by some copyist from the end of the following verse. Having once used them, the prophet there appropriately employs them again. Besides, there is nothing in the LXX. to express the words *בְּשֵׁר וְהִלָּחִי*, which do not occur in verse 4.

4. For *וְיָחִיד* read *וְיָחִיד*, as in ver. 3. Thus twenty-one MSS.,—five more originally, two more by correction—the Soncin. Bible and Prophets, Targ., and Syriac.

5. The very brute creation were re-

duced to the last extremity for want of food. The hind, contrary to the feelings of natural affection, abandons her young, and the wild asses betake themselves to the heights in order to discover some supply. The latter are very sharp-sighted, and travellers in the desert frequently avail themselves of their appearance, knowing that there must be herbage and water in the vicinity. *וְיָחִיד*, the infinitive absolute, for the finite form of the verb, for the sake of continuing the narration more emphatically.

7. *וְיָחִיד*, used absolutely, signifies *to do* or *act* in any way. Its specific acception in any given passage must be determined by circumstances. Here the idea is that of interposition by removing the drought. God is often said to do anything *for his name's sake*, when thereby his honour and glory would be preserved or promoted. His abandonment of his people might be construed by their enemies into a proof of his inability to help them. Comp. Josh. vii. 9 ; Ps. lxxix. 9 ; Is. xlviii. 9.

8. As *וְיָחִיד* is obviously implied in the verb *וְיָחִיד*, I have not scrupled to express



His Deliverer in the time of distress ;  
 Why art Thou as a stranger in the land,  
 Or as a traveller who spreadeth his tent for the night ?

- 9 Why art Thou as one struck dumb,  
 Or as a hero unable to deliver ?  
 Yet Thou art in the midst of us, O Jehovah !  
 And we are called by thy name,  
 Abandon us not.

- 10 Thus saith Jehovah to this people :  
 They have loved so to wander,  
 They have not restrained their feet,  
 Therefore Jehovah accepteth them not ;  
 Now he will remember their iniquity,  
 He will punish their sin.

- 11 Then said Jehovah to me :  
 Pray not on behalf of this people for good.

- 12 For though they may fast,  
 I will not hear their cry ;  
 And though they may offer holocausts and oblations,  
 I will not accept them :  
 But I will consume them by the sword,  
 And by the famine, and by the pestilence.

- 13 And I said,  
 Ah ! Lord Jehovah !  
 Behold ! the prophets say to them,

it in the translation. Mistaking  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , written in full  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , for  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , the LXX. render  $\alphaὐτόχθων$ .

9.  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , a  $\alpha\pi\alpha\gamma\lambda\epsilon\gamma$ . Arab.  $\text{لَهْم}$ , to come suddenly upon any one, to confound, stupify, strike dumb. The LXX. give to the word the signification of  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , to be in a profound sleep or stupor. There can be little doubt that in rendering it by  $\text{ἐπνῶν}$ , they mistook the one verb for the other.

10.  $\text{כֵּן}$  is here used as an adverb of degree: *so greatly, to such an extent*, or the like. In  $\text{כֵּן}$   $\text{אֵל}$  is a meiosis. So far was Jehovah from being pleased with the Jews, that he was highly displeased with them, as was proved by the drought with

which they had been visited, but which was only the commencement of his judgments. He would still further punish them.

11. See chap. vii. 16.

12. It appears, from this verse, that the people had again engaged in the external service of Jehovah, in the hope that this would avert his anger ; but as they were not really weaned from idolatry, it is declared to be in vain.

13. The language which the prophet here employs, is not a violation of the prohibition, ver. 11 ; it only accounts for their rebellious conduct by tracing it to the influence of false prophets, by whom they had been seduced.  $\text{שְׁלוֹם אֱמֶת}$ , lit. *peace of truth*, i. e. *true, lasting, durable*,

- Ye shall not see the sword,  
 And ye shall have no famine,  
 For I will give you stable peace in this place.
- 14 Then Jehovah said to me :  
 The prophets prophesy falsehood in my name ;  
 I have not sent them,  
 Neither have I charged them,  
 Nor spoken to them :  
 False vision, and divination, and nonentity,  
 And the deceit of their own heart,  
 They prophesy to you.
- 15 Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the prophets  
 That prophesy in my name, though I have not sent them,  
 That say, Neither sword nor famine  
 Shall there be in this land ;  
 By sword and by famine shall those prophets be consumed.
- 16 And the people to whom they prophesy  
 Shall be cast out into the streets of Jerusalem,  
 By reason of the famine and of the sword,  
 And no one shall bury them,  
 Them, their wives, and their sons and their daughters ;  
 For I will pour out upon them their calamity.
- 17 Thou shalt also speak to them this word :  
 Let mine eyes run down with tears, night and day,  
 And let them not cease ;  
 For the virgin daughter of my people is broken  
 With a great breach, a very grievous stroke.
- 18 If I go forth into the field,  
 Behold ! the slain with the sword ;  
 And, if I enter the city,  
 Behold ! those who pine with famine ;

*peace* ; for which we have *שלום ושלום*, *peace and truth*, Is. xxxix. 8. The LXX. ἀλήθειαν καὶ εἰρήνην. The prophets fallaciously mixed up what they pretended to be the words of Jehovah with their own.

14. For *אמרו*, the Keri has the usual orthography, *אמרו*.

16. The use of the verb *פָּקַד*, *to pour out*, indicates the vehemence of the judg-

ments with which the people were to be visited. By *אָרָם*, *wickedness*, the consequences of it are meant.

17, 18. The prophet is commissioned to give expression to the profound grief which he felt in anticipation of the calamities that were coming upon his people, whom he personifies as a virgin, because they had never been subdued by any foreign prince. See my Note on

- Surely both prophet and priest shall migrate  
To a land which they know not.
- 19 Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?  
Doth thy soul abominate Zion?  
Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no cure for us?  
We expected peace, but there is no good;  
And a time of cure, but behold! terror.
- 20 We acknowledge, O Jehovah! our wickedness,  
And the iniquity of our fathers;  
For we have sinned against thee.
- 21 Reject not, for thy name's sake,  
Disgrace not the throne of thy glory;  
Remember, break not thy covenant with us.
- 22 Can any among the vanities of the nations give rain?  
Or can the heavens give showers?  
Art not Thou He, O Jehovah our God?  
Therefore we will hope in thee;  
For thou doest all these things.

Is. xxiii. 12. The idea properly conveyed by *בָּרַח לְאֶרֶץ*, is that of going into a country for purposes of traffic. Instead of enjoying security, luxury, and ease in their native land, the Jews, led away into captivity, would be exposed to all the perils and hardships of those who travel abroad in quest of gain. The deceivers and the deceived should have the like fate. Maurer: in terram ipsis incognitam, *i.e.* in exilium.

19. *וְהָיָה*, see chap. viii. 15. From the commencement of this verse to the end of the chapter, the people are introduced

as doing what the prophet was forbidden to do on their behalf.

22. *וְהָיָה הַשָּׁמַיִם*, the vanities of the nations, *i.e.* their fictitious deities. See on chap. ii. 5. Ewald: *Heiden-Nichtigkeiten*. The heavens could not give rain of themselves, considered as natural elements, much less could they as objects of worship. Jehovah, as the Great First Cause, was alone to be regarded. He alone was entitled to the confidence of his people. *וְהָיָה* occurs as a verb only in this place.



## CHAPTER XV.

Adverting to the prayer which had just been presented, God declares that not even the supplications of the most eminent of his servants would avail to avert the punishment of the Jews, 1. This punishment is then denounced in various forms, 2—9; which calls forth a heavy complaint on the part of Jeremiah, 10. Jehovah, to comfort him, reminds him of former interpositions on his

behalf, 11; and predicts the inevitable removal of the Jews into a state of exile, 12—14. The prophet then pleads the deplorable condition to which the faithful discharge of his prophetic duties had reduced him, 15; the readiness with which he had received the Divine messages, which he contrasts with the sad consequences of the delivery of them to the people, 16—18. On this God encourages him with the assurance, that, if he will only resume the public discharge of his functions, he will afford him all necessary protection, 19—21.

- 
- 1 THEN said Jehovah to me :  
 Though Moses or Samuel stood before me,  
 My soul should not be toward this people ;  
 Dismiss them from my presence, that they may go away.
- 2 And it shall be, if they say to thee,  
 Whither shall we go ?  
 That thou shalt say to them,  
 Thus saith Jehovah :  
 Those who are for death, let them be for death ;  
 Those who are for the sword, for the sword ;  
 Those who are for famine, for famine ;  
 And those who are for captivity, for captivity.
- 3 Yea, I will punish them by four kinds, saith Jehovah,  
 The sword to kill, and the dogs to tear,  
 The birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field,  
 To devour and to destroy.
- 4 And I will give them up to agitation  
 In all the kingdoms of the earth,  
 On account of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah,  
 For that which he did in Jerusalem.
- 5 For who will take pity upon thee, O Jerusalem ?  
 And who will commiserate thee ?  
 Or, who will turn aside to ask how thou doest ?

1. Moses and Samuel had effectively interceded on behalf of their people, Exod. xxxii. 11—14; 1 Sam. vii. 5—14; but not even their intercession, could they employ it, would be of any avail now. The Jews had proved themselves to be incorrigible, and the Divine purpose to punish them was unalterable. After the supply <sup>אֲנִי</sup>.

4. <sup>אֲנִי</sup>, or as Keri, <sup>אֲנִי</sup>, agitation. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 25; chap. xxiv. 9;

xxix. 18; xxxiv. 17; 2 Chron. xxix. 8. The Jews were to have no rest, but were to be driven from place to place at the pleasure of their enemies. Ewald: *Spiel des Windes*. As the people persevered in the idolatries which had been practised by Manasseh, they were to meet with condign punishment.

5—9. The Preterite is used as the prophetic Future throughout this passage, to express the certainty of the

- 6 Thou hast forsaken me, saith Jehovah,  
Thou art gone away backward :  
Therefore I have stretched out my hand against thee,  
And destroyed thee ;  
I have been wearied with repenting.
- 7 Yea, I have winnowed them with a winnowing instrument  
In the gates of the land,  
I have bereaved, I have destroyed my people,  
Because they returned not from their ways.
- 8 Their widows are more in number to me than the sand of  
the sea,  
I have brought to them—against the mother—  
A young spoiler at noon-day :  
I have suddenly caused to fall upon them  
Anguish and terror.

events. שַׁעַר הָאֵרֶץ, *the gates of the land*, mean the extreme points at which an entrance or an exit was effected. Jehovah threatens to carry them thither, to be thence scattered among the nations. Comp. Nah. iii. 13.

S. י in מְיָרֵי, which wants the ' of the suffix form, has for its antecedent עַי in the preceding verse. The following words, מְיָרֵי הָאֵם, have been very differently construed. Nor is the difficulty which they present by any means easy of solution, however simple the words may be in themselves. LXX. ἐπὶ μητέρα νεανίσκους. Some compare the phrase מְיָרֵי הָאֵם, *the mother with her children*, but the position of the preposition before and not after אֵם, renders such construction untenable. Others take מְיָרֵי הָאֵם, to be in the construct state: *the mother of the young man*, or regarding the nouns as collectives: *the mothers of the young men*; but neither of these affords a suitable sense. Jarchi, Capellus, Castalio, De Dieu, Döderlein, Eichhorn, and Dahler, consider אֵם, *mother*, to mean the *metropolis*, as 2 Sam. xx. 19, and מְיָרֵי, 2 Sam. viii. 1. The word is thus used on Phœ-

nician coins. Comp. the Arab. اُم, the Greek μήτηρ; Callim. Fragm. 112; and

the Latin *mater*, Flor. 3. 7. 18; Ammian, 17. 13; Gesenius, *in voc.* The objection of Schnurrer, that it wants the article, is of little force, as the prophets sometimes omit it for the sake of condensation. See Is. xxi. 12, and Nordheimer's Gram. vol. ii. p. 13, note. This, on the whole, as the text now stands, is the preferable interpretation. If conjecture were allowable, we might suppose that instead of מְיָרֵי הָאֵם, the words were originally מְיָרֵי אֵם, as אֵם is feeble after the preceding verb. מְיָרֵי I take to be a participial adjective qualifying מְיָרֵי, and placed before it for the sake of emphasis. Comp. Is. liii. 11; Jer. iii. 7, 8, 10. By the "young spoiler" is meant Nebuchadnezzar II., who, when his father was old and infirm, had part of the Chaldean army committed to him, and after defeating Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish, marched forward against Jerusalem and captured it. The attack being made at noon indicates the *unexpectedness* by which it was characterised, that being the time of day when, owing to intense heat, military operations are carried on with less vigour. Compare מְיָרֵי, suddenly, in the following hemistich. מְיָרֵי, LXX., τρόμον, *consternation, terror, anguish*; from מְיָרֵי, *to be hot*, indicating a heated or excited state of mind.

- 9 She that bare seven languisheth,  
 She breatheth out her soul ;  
 Her sun goeth down while it is yet day,  
 It is ashamed and confounded ;  
 As for the remainder of them,  
 I will deliver them to the sword before their enemies,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 10 Alas for me ! O my mother !  
 That thou hast borne me to be a man of strife ;  
 And a man of contention to the whole land :  
 I have neither lent, nor have men lent to me,  
 Yet every one of them curseth me.
- 11 Jehovah saith :  
 Have I not set thee free for good ?  
 Have I not made the enemy take thy part,  
 In the time of calamity, and in the time of distress ?

9. Seven being the perfect number, the idea here conveyed is that of fruitfulness. Jerusalem, the mother city, referred to in the preceding verse, had had many inhabitants whom the king of Babylon carried away captive, 2 Kings xxiv. שבע is of common gender, consequently either the Chethib שבע, or the Keri שבע, will agree with it. By "sun" is meant the sunshine of prosperity, of which the Jews were suddenly and unexpectedly deprived. It is more natural to refer the verbs שבע and שבע to the sun than to Jerusalem. To express this sense I have used the neuter gender as alone suitable to the idiom of our language. The שבע, remainder, were those of the inhabitants who suffered in the second attack on the city under Jehoiachin. 2 Kings xxiv.

10. The prophet pathetically complains of the ill-treatment to which the delivery of the Divine message to his countrymen had subjected him. He had not mixed himself up with the business of the world, yet he was treated as if he had been a hard-hearted usurer, or as such a usurer, had he been his debtor, would have treated him. שבע is written defectively for שבע. The irregular form שבע, which Hahn, on the au-

thority of the Masora, changes into the third person plural שבע, has doubtless originated in transcription—the former of two Nuns having been taken for a Vau, so that originally the word must have been written שבע; or, as three MSS. read, and four more have read originally, שבע, perhaps doubling the Nun by a Dagesh Epenthetic. The pronominal suffix in שבע, which, as more commonly written, would be שבע, is to be taken as a collective, and rendered in the plural.

11. Of the various readings שבע, שבע, שבע, שבע, שבע, the second שבע, claims the preference, and is to be taken in the sense of *loosening, setting free*; שבע, taking in Piel the signification of the Chald. שבע. God promises the prophet a happy deliverance from the persecutions of his ungrateful countrymen. While they were to be taken away captive to Babylon, he was to be set at liberty, and treated with kindness. For the literal fulfilment, see chap. xl 4. Maurer and Ewald prefer the root שבע, to strengthen, confirm, preserve.—שבע, I will cause to be at peace, from the root שבע, to fall upon, to meet, both in a bad and a good sense, to intercede for another, take his part, interest oneself on his behalf. The enemy is naturally understood.

- 12 Can one break iron, the iron of the north, and brass ?  
 13 Thy force and thy treasures I will give for spoil, not for  
     a price,  
     But for all thy sins, and that in all thy borders.  
 14 And I will cause thee to serve thine enemies  
     In a land which thou knowest not :  
     For a fire is kindled in mine anger,  
     It shall be made to burn against you.  
 15 O Jehovah ! Thou knowest my condition,  
     Remember me, and visit me,  
     And avenge me of my persecutors ;  
     In thy long-suffering take me not away ;  
     Regard my suffering of reproach for thy sake.  
 16 Thy words were found, and I devoured them,  
     And thy word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart ;

12—14. The discourse in these verses is directed to the people, who are taught the invincible power of their enemies, and the cause of their mastery over them. The northern iron is here employed metonymically for the Chaldeans, whose residence was in the north. Iron is often used as the symbol of hardness or strength. The hardest preparation of it, resembling our *steel*, was made by the Chalybes, a people who lived near the Black Sea. It was doubtless this iron which formed the basis of the metonymy here employed. For בַּרְזֵל, four MSS., four others originally, and perhaps two more, read בַּרְזֵל, which is supported by the renderings in the LXX., the Hexap. Syr., and Theod., but has no claim on adoption, the variation having manifestly been occasioned by the Resh having been mistaken for a Daleth. The verb I consider to be used impersonally, and בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ to be in apposition with בַּרְזֵל, and added for the sake of effect. This construction is preferable to that which would make the former בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ the nominative to the verb—involving that ordinary iron is not so hard as brass, which is contrary to fact. How our translators came to render בַּרְזֵל by *steel*, is unaccountable, since this term might appropriately be applied to designate בַּרְזֵל מִצָּפוֹן, the *northern iron* ; where-

as בַּרְזֵל never has any other signification than that of *brass* or *copper*. The language “all thy sins” and “all thy borders,” ver. 13, at once evinces that it is not the prophet, but the people of the Jews, to whom it applies. Instead of the reading of the Textus Receptus וְהִצְרִיתִי, which affords no suitable sense, I have adopted וְהִצְרִיתִי on the authority of thirteen MSS. and twelve more originally, supported by seven MSS. of the Targum, by four of the printed editions, and, so far as the ו is concerned, by the reading וְהִצְרִיתִי, found in two MSS. in three more at first hand, and in the LXX. and Syr. The same reading occurs in the parallel passage, chap. xvii. 4. If that in the common text were genuine, it would require אֵל, but could not take אֵל after it.

15. The object of the long-suffering here specified was not the prophet, but his enemies. He prays that while God was exercising patience towards them, he would not permit them to take away his life.

16. The inspired communications had been received by Jeremiah with the deepest interest, and he had cheerfully discharged the duties of the office to which he had been called as a prophet of the true God. To *eat words*, or a *book*,

- For I am called by thy name, O Jehovah, God of Hosts !
- 17 I have not sat in the secret council of mockers, and exulted ;  
Because of thy hand I have sat alone,  
Surely thou hast filled me with indignation.
- 18 Why is my pain perpetual ?  
And my wound incurable ?  
It refuseth to be healed :  
Thou art altogether become to me as a deceitful brook,  
And as waters which fail.
- 19 Therefore thus saith Jehovah :  
If thou wilt return, then I will bring thee back,  
And thou shalt stand before me ;  
And if thou wilt bring out the precious from the vile,  
Then thou shalt be as my mouth :  
Let them return to thee,  
But thou shalt not return to them.
- 20 And I will make thee in reference to this people  
A strong wall of brass ;  
Though they may fight with thee,  
Yet they shall not prevail against thee ;  
For I am with thee, to preserve thee, and to deliver thee,  
Saith Jehovah.

Ezek. ii. 8 ; iii. 1 ; Rev. x. 9, 10, is not peculiar to the Hebrew. Hence the Greek *φάγειν ῥήματα*, the Latin *dicta devorare* ; and in our own language, if asked whether we have read such or such a book, our reply is : Read it ? we quite devoured it ! Instead of *אָרַבְתָּ, thy words*, the Keri has *אָרַבְתָּ, thy word*, agreeing with *אָרַבְתָּ* in the singular ; and this reading is found in twenty MSS., originally in two more, in four of the early editions, and in all the ancient versions.

17. The hilarity which the prophet had experienced was not that of the ungodly who, at their festive meetings, treated divine things with scorn. With these he had had no fellowship, but because of the faithful communication of his inspired messages he had been expelled from society, and made the object of their fiercest indignation. The occurrence of "indignation" with the

"hand" of Jehovah in this verse, has generally induced the supposition that by the latter the afflicting power of God is intended ; but it seems more in accordance with the bearing of the connexion to regard *אָרַבְתָּ* as designed to convey the idea of powerful Divine impulse or prophetic inspiration. Comp. Ezek. i. 3 ; iii. 14, and frequently. Thus Vatablus, Clarius.

18. Jeremiah here complains of the profound grief which he felt at being so long cut off from the discharge of his office, and of his being abandoned in his solitary condition by Jehovah, whose denunciations of punishment he had been the instrument of communicating to the Jews.

19 — 21. These verses contain the reply of God to the complaint of the prophet. He is assured, that if he will leave his solitude, and resume the public



- 21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked,  
And redeem thee out of the grasp of the terrible.

announcement of the Divine will, impartially discriminating the character of those whom he addressed, and faithfully standing his ground, without in the least

yielding to their depraved and rebellious wishes, he might confidently rely on protection from on high.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Most interpreters are of opinion, that the discourse which commences with this chapter is continued to chapter xvii. 18.

That Jeremiah might serve as a symbol to the Jews of the pitiable condition to which they were to be reduced, he is forbidden to enter into the relations of domestic life, or to condole with his bereaved countrymen, 2—7, as well as to participate in their festivities, 8, 9. On their inquiring why the predicted calamities should come upon them, he is instructed to specify the accumulated guilt of themselves and their ancestors in abandoning the worship of the true God for that of idols, 10—12. The captivity is then distinctly foretold, 13; while a description is given of their restoration at some future period, strongly implying the reality of the exile, 14, 15. The Chaldeans are next introduced, under the metaphors of fishermen and hunters, by whom they were to be captured, 16. After once more coupling together their sin and its punishment, the latter of which was to take place before any restoration could be expected, 17, 18, the prophet, anticipating the feelings of the Jews on their return to their own land, breaks out in praise of the character of Jehovah, and predicts, at the same time, the conversion of the heathen, 19—21.

- 1 THE word of Jehovah was also communicated to me, saying :
- 2 Thou shalt not take to thee a wife,  
Neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.
- 3 For thus saith Jehovah respecting the sons and respecting the daughters,  
That are born in this place ;  
And respecting their mothers that bare them,  
And respecting their fathers that begat them in this land ;

2. Rosenmüller properly observes, that by "this place" we are to understand, neither Anathoth, the city of the prophet, nor Jerusalem, the metropolis, but the whole land of Judea. By remaining in the single state, Jeremiah was to be a

symbol of the then future condition of his countrymen. Compare Ezek. xxiv. 15—27. יָדָה, like יָדָה, has a passive signification. The Dagesh is euphonic.

3, 4. The enumeration of particulars in these verses greatly enhances the

- 4 They shall die of mortal diseases,  
 They shall not be mourned for,  
 Neither shall they be buried ;  
 They shall become manure upon the surface of the ground ;  
 They shall be consumed with the sword and with the famine,  
 And their carcases shall become food  
 To the fowls of heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.
- 5 Surely thus saith Jehovah :  
 Enter not the house of wailing,  
 Neither go to mourn for, nor to condole with them :  
 For I have faken away my peace from this people, saith  
 Jehovah,  
 Both kindness and pity.
- 6 Both great and small shall die in this land,  
 They shall not be buried, neither shall men mourn for them ;  
 They shall not cut themselves,  
 Neither shall they make themselves bald for them.
- 7 They shall not break bread for them in mourning  
 To console them respecting the dead :  
 Neither shall they give them the cup of consolation to drink,  
 For one's father, or for one's mother.
- 8 Neither shalt thou enter the house of feasting, to sit with them ;  
 To eat, and to drink.
- 9 For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel :  
 Behold I will cause to cease from this place,  
 In your sight, and in your days,  
 The sound of gladness and the sound of joy ;  
 The sound of the bridegroom and the sound of the bride.

effect. The scene depicted is of the most abhorrent character. *מַסֵּחִי*, the plural construct of *מַסֵּחַ*, from *מָסַח*, as *קָדַח* from *קָדַח*. — *מַסֵּחֵי מַחֲמָתָם*, literally *deaths of diseases* ; i.e. diseases issuing in death, such as were incurable and deadly.

5, 6. *וַיִּהְיֶה* occurs only here, and Amos vi. 7, and denotes either a shout of joy, or a shriek of sorrow, as the two passages respectively show. The Jews were to be left destitute of all comfort and enjoyment. *וַיִּכְרֹם*, to cut or slash the flesh, indicative of extravagant grief, was

customary among the Hebrews, and other ancient nations, Jer. xli. 5 ; xlvii. 5, though expressly prohibited by the Mosaic law, Lev. xix. 28.

7. *וַיִּכְרֹם* is used elliptically for *וַיִּכְרֹם וַיִּשְׁכַּח*, to break bread. Not adverting to this, the LXX., Vulg., Arab., and one MS., substitute *וַיִּשְׁכַּח* for the following *וַיִּכְרֹם*, which the close connexion of this verse with the preceding requires us to retain. The same reading is found in Rabboth. For *וַיִּכְרֹם* many MSS. read *וַיִּכְרֹם*, which is merely a cognate root, with the same signification, but never used with *וַיִּכְרֹם*.

- 10 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have declared to this people all these words, and they shall say to thee :  
On what account hath Jehovah denounced all this great calamity against us? What is our iniquity? And what is our sin that we have committed against Jehovah our
- 11 God? Then thou shalt say to them :  
Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith Jehovah ;  
And have followed other gods,  
And have served them, and worshipped them :  
And have forsaken me, and have not kept my law.
- 12 And ye yourselves have acted more wickedly than your fathers ;  
For behold ! ye have followed, each the obstinacy of his wicked heart,  
Not hearkening to me.
- 13 Therefore I will cast you out from this land,  
To a land which ye have not known, neither ye nor your fathers ;  
And there ye shall serve other gods, day and night,  
And I will show you no favour.
- 14 Nevertheless, the days are coming, saith Jehovah,  
When it shall no more be said : Jehovah liveth,  
That brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt :
- 15 But Jehovah liveth, that hath brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North,  
And from all the lands whither he had driven them :  
For I will bring them back to their own land,  
Which I gave to their fathers.
- 16 Behold ! I will send many fishers, saith Jehovah,  
And they shall fish them ;  
And after that I will send many hunters,

12, 13. For the phrase *לֹא יִהְיֶה*, see on chap. iii. 17. In the phrase "day and night," Rosenmüller finds an irony—*i.e.* there among idolaters you may indulge your evil propensities to the full ; you may practise your idolatries without intermission, which I will no longer permit you to do in the land which I claim as my own.

14. While it is here expressly declared that Jehovah would be appealed to under the character of the Deliverer of the Jews from another national slavery than

that in Egypt, it is necessarily implied that they were to be removed to the countries here referred to, and this for their apostasy, as set forth ver. 13, and repeated verses 17, 18. Thus, the language of the prophet was calculated to lead the ungodly to repentance, and at the same time, to sustain the hope of those who were looking for the consolation of Israel.

16—18. These verses properly connect with ver. 13, and not with verses 14 and 15. They contain a prediction

- And they shall hunt them,  
 From every mountain, and from every hill,  
 And from the clefts of the rocks.
- 17 For mine eyes are upon all their ways,  
 They are not concealed from my face ;  
 Neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.
- 18 Previously, however, I will doubly retribute their iniquity and  
 their sin ;  
 Because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their  
 abominations,  
 And they have filled mine inheritance with their detestable  
 things.
- 19 O Jehovah ! my strength and my fortress !  
 And my refuge in the day of distress !  
 To thee the nations shall come from the ends of the earth,  
 And shall say :  
 Surely our fathers have inherited falsehood,  
 Objects of vanity, and there is none among them that  
 profiteth.
- 20 Shall a man make to himself gods, and they are not God ?
- 21 Therefore I will this once cause them to know,

of the repeated invasion of the land of Judea by the Chaldeans, who should scour the whole territory, penetrating into the most inaccessible parts. The  $\text{ל}$  in  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  and  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  is the Aramaic Accusative. Comp. 2 Chron. xvii. 7. For  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  the Keri has  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$ , doubtless to bring the form into accordance with  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  following ; but the Chethiv occurs again, Ezek. xlvii. 10. Maurer finds a certain elegance in the position of the adjective before its substantive in  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$ , but the discovery appears to me to be purely fanciful in the present instance, as  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  occupies its usual position in the preceding part of the verse. The same objection militates against the opinion of Hitzig, that the word is thus placed as an adjective of number. It otherwise not unfrequently takes the precedence. See Neh. ix. 29 ; Ps. lxxxix. 51 ; Prov. xxxi. 29.

18. The prophet reverts to the promise specified verses 14, 15, and states, that

before it should be fulfilled, God would inflict full or ample punishment on the Jewish people. Comp. Is. xl. 2, where  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  corresponds to  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  in the present case.  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$  is used adverbially, and  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$ , though in the construct state, is to be viewed in the same light.  $\text{לֹא־יִסְתָּכְרוּ}$ , taken collectively, designates the sacrifices which the Jews offered to idols ; these and the people who offered them were alike objects of abomination in the sight of God.

19, 20. The language both of the recovered Jews and the converted heathen in reference to Jehovah as the true God, to whose worship they are regarded as having returned after having been convinced of the folly of idolatry. In many of the prophecies the restoration of the Jews from Babylon, and the conversion of pagan nations, are connected. It is the former, and not the latter, to whom the 20th verse applies.

21. The "hand" and "might" which

I will cause them to know my hand and my might,  
And they shall know that my name is Jehovah.

they were to know or feel, were the severe afflictions to be suffered during the captivity, and which they required to experience only once more in order to be effectually weaned from idolatry.

## CHAPTER XVII.

The prophet, reverting to the inveterate propensity of the Jews to idolatrous indulgences, 1, 2, again predicts the approaching exile, 3, 4. He then reprobates their propensity to rely upon the assistance of Egypt, 5, 6; contrasting with the miserable condition of those whose hearts are thus alienated from Jehovah, the happiness of those who sincerely and simply confide in him for protection, 7, 8. To warn his countrymen against self-deception, he sets forth the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and the certainty that God, who alone could fathom its depths, would deal with every one according to his real character, 9, 10. The folly of confiding in unrighteous wealth is next exposed, 11, and an announcement made of the destruction of all whose confidence is not placed in Jehovah, the only solid foundation of hope, 12, 13. Complaining of the sorrows which the refractory conduct of his auditors had occasioned, he applies to God for relief, 14, 15; appeals to him in reference to the fidelity with which, nevertheless, he had fulfilled his prophetic duties, 16; and, while he avows his unshaken trust in Jehovah, he prays for preservation in the midst of the calamities with which he threatens the rebellious, 17, 18. The section, 19—27, relates to the profanation of the sabbath, which appears to have abounded in the days of the prophet.

The first four verses of this chapter are wanting in the LXX., but were inserted by Origen in his Hexapla, from the other Greek versions. They are found in Eusebii *Demon. Evan.*, and the *Commentary of Theodoret*. How they were omitted cannot be ascertained. Jerome, without any ground, supposes, that it was done by the LXX., in order to spare the Jews the heavy accusation which is here brought against them. On the same principle they might have omitted a large portion of the book.

- 
- 1 THE sin of Judah is written with an iron pen,  
With a diamond point;  
It is graven on the tablet of their heart,  
And on the horns of their altars:

1, 2. In these verses Schnurrer finds an instance of that species of Hebrew poetry which Lowth characterises by the name of alternate parallelism, the third member corresponding to the first, and the fourth to the second. There is, how-

- 2 While their children remember their altars,  
And their images of Astarte on the green trees,  
Upon the high hills.
- 3 O my mountain together with the country !  
Thy substance, all thy treasures I will give for a spoil ;  
Thy high places for sin in all thy borders.

ever, only a faint and imperfect trace of it. The idea of Hitzig, that the writing here spoken of refers to the Divine register, in which the sin of Judah was inscribed for punishment, is at once refuted by the text itself, in which it is expressly declared to be the heart of the people. The iron stylus, or the stylus pointed with a diamond, being used to inscribe any thing on a hard substance, such as metal or stone, what was thus written was considered to be durable, since it was not easily effaced. Comp. Job xix. 24; and for the hardness of the diamond, Pliny, Hist. Nat. 37. 15 : *duritia inenarrabilis est*. Idolatry was so inherent in the hearts of the Jews that it might metaphorically be said to be engraven on them with indelible characters. To this corresponded the external proof in the constancy with which their idolatrous altars were stained with the blood of the victims. This smearing with blood was in imitation of what was ordained in the Levitical law, Exod. xxix. 12; Lev. iv. 7. The children, instead of forsaking the wicked practices of their fathers, delighted in keeping them up. Their hearts were set upon their idols. Instead of *altars*, your altars, we find the more appropriate reading, *their altars*, in one hundred and twenty-nine MSS. It has been in twenty-eight more at first hand, and is now in seventeen by correction. It is also in three printed editions, and is expressed in the Syr., Vulg., and Arab. versions. The *2* in *22* is used as a particle of time, and not for the purpose of comparison. Some would make the Jews the nominative to this form of the verb, and explain it of their remembering their children which they had offered in sacrifice to idols, but this seems a less eligible interpretation. For Astarte, see my Commentary on Is.

xvii. 8. Instead of *2*, upon, we should have expected *22* *22* *22*, "under the green tree," as in the Targ., Syr., and Arab., or, taking *22* collectively, *trees*; but the preposition may here be used to express the idea that the images of Astarte were placed upon the branches of the trees in the groves, and thus were conspicuous objects of worship. This is more probable than that it should be employed in two different senses in the same parallelism. The readings *22* *22* *22* and *22*, however respectably supported, appear to be emendations of copyists in imitation of these forms, which frequently occur in the prophets.

3. By the "mountain" here addressed we are obviously to understand Jerusalem, on account of its elevated position, and especially that of Zion and Moriah, which was reckoned to it, and on which the temple was built. Being the place which Jehovah had chosen as the residence of his visible glory, he claims it as his, just as he frequently calls it *22* *22*, "My holy mountain," Is. xi. 9; lvi. 7; lvii. 13. To this interpretation it has been objected, that, as Jerusalem is surrounded by hills, some of which are higher than its own position, it cannot be said to be *22*, in the field. This objection, however, is founded on a mistaken view both of the substantive and the preposition. *22* properly signifies *open country*, whether of larger or smaller extent, and mountainous as well as plain. Comp. Gen. xxxii. 4; Judges ix. 32, 36; Jer. xviii. 14. Hence *22* *22*, the country round about a city and belonging to it, and *22* *22* *22*, cities of the country, or country-towns. It is not, therefore, necessary to limit the application of the term here to the field or fields in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. It rather comprehends the whole country of Judah, as opposed to

- 4 And thou through thyself shalt discontinue thine inheritance,  
Which I have given to thee ;  
And I will cause thee to serve thine enemies,  
In a land which thou hast not known :  
For the fire which ye have kindled in mine anger  
Shall burn for ever.
- 5 Thus saith Jehovah :  
Cursed is the man who trusteth in man,  
And maketh flesh his arm :  
And whose heart departeth from Jehovah.
- 6 He shall be like the juniper in the desert,  
And shall not see when good cometh :  
And he shall dwell in the arid places in the wilderness,  
A salt land, and uninhabited.

the metropolis. Besides, although *א* more commonly signifies *in* or *by*, yet it is also used in the signification of *with*, *together with*, *along with*. See Numb. xx. 20; Jer. xi. 19; and is so to be rendered in the present instance. *הַרְבֵּעַ*, *thy high places*, correspond to *הָרִים*, *my mountain*; and *הַגְּבֻלֹת*, *all thy borders*, to *הָאֶרֶץ*, *the country*. Not only the mountains or heights around Jerusalem, but also those throughout the country were selected as localities for the performance of idolatrous worship, in imitation of the heathen, who believed that worship presented on such high places was peculiarly acceptable to the host of heaven. Though *הָרִים* in the singular has the support of more than one hundred and fifty MSS., the use of *בָּ* before the plural *הַגְּבֻלֹת* shows that the latter must be the true reading.

4. Not only the wealth of the country but also the inhabitants were to be carried into exile. Comp. chap. xv. 14. *וְגַב*, lit. *and through thee*, i.e. by means of thine own wickedness. Thou hast thyself alone to blame for thine expatriation. Maurer: *tua culpa*. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, have read the word as a verb, having *καὶ ταπεινωθήσῃ* in their text. Michaelis omits it altogether.

5—8. Though containing a beautiful contrasted description of the miserable

condition of the ungodly, and of the happy state of the pious, universally applicable in all ages of the world, there cannot be a doubt that, when delivered by the prophet, these verses had a direct reference to the circumstances of the Jews, who, threatened by an invasion of the Chaldeans, were tempted to look for protection to the king of Egypt, whose vassals they were.

6. That *אֲרָז*, or as it is spelt *אֲרִיז*, chap. xlviii. 6, means some kind of tree, is almost universally allowed, and would indeed seem to require this interpretation from *וְעַ*, which is contrasted with it, ver.

8. LXX., *ἀγρομυρική*. Vulg., *murica*

Targ. *מְרִיזָה*, *trunk of a tree*. Syr. *ܐܪܝܙܐ*,

*root*. Arab. *الظرفا*, *the tamarisk*. Symm.

*ξύλον ἀκαρπον*. I acquiesce in the

opinion of Dr. Robinson, that it is the same as the Arab. *عرعر*, *Arar*, the

*juniper-tree*, which is found in the vicinity of the Arabah, or the Great Valley, to the south of the Dead Sea, and doubtless the same desert which Jeremiah here calls *הַגְּבֻלֹת*. See Biblical Researches, ii. 506. Thus De Wette: *Wacholderbaum*. The same form of the word occurs Ps. cii. 18, where the idea conveyed is that of *naked, destitute*. The point of comparison in the two

- 7 Blessed is the man who trusteth in Jehovah,  
And whose confidence Jehovah is.
- 8 He shall be as a tree planted beside the water,  
Which sendeth forth its roots beside the stream,  
And seeth not when heat cometh ;  
Whose leaf is green,  
Which languisheth not in the year of drought ;  
And ceaseth not to produce fruit.
- 9 The heart is more deceitful than anything :  
Yea, it is desperate : who can know it ?
- 10 I, Jehovah, the Searcher of the heart,  
And the Trier of the reins :  
To give to every one according to his ways,  
According to the fruit of his deeds.
- 11 As the partridge sitteth on eggs which it hath not laid,  
So is he that acquireth riches, but not righteously :

passages of our prophet is the forlorn appearance of a solitary juniper, deprived of all nourishment in the arid desert.—*וְיָבֵשׁ* is here, as frequently, to be taken passively: *shall be inhabited*. Comp. ver. 25.

8. Compare as a real parallel Ps. i. 3. For *מִן* the Keri reads *מִן* in full, but we have other instances of the apocope in verbs without the *Vau* prefixed. See Job xx. 28; xxxiii. 21; Zech. ix. 5. The LXX. have read *מִן*, and rendered *φοβηθήσεαι*. Though not inapt in itself, this rendering breaks in upon the beautiful contrast which this verse forms to ver. 6. The pious man who makes God his confidence is truly happy, whatever may be the outward circumstances in which he may be placed.

9, 10. The description here given of the heart is not of that of any one man in particular, as Michaelis and Maurer suppose, considering Jehoakim to have been intended, nor that of any particular class of men, but of the human heart universally in its natural and unregenerate state. Still it was designed to be, in the first instance, applied by the Jews to themselves in the days of the prophet, to convince them of their proneness to transfer their confidence from Jehovah to the creature. *יָבֵשׁ*, *deceitful*,

is derived from *יָבַשׁ*, *to lie in wait for, and seize by the heel, trip, act insidiously*. The LXX. render the word by *βαθεία*, as if they had read *יָבֵשׁ*, *deep*. Vulg.

*pravum*. Syr. *ܐܝܢܐ ܥܝܢܐ*, *hard, obstinate*.

Targ. *ܐܝܢܐ ܥܝܢܐ*, *deceitful*. *יָבֵשׁ*, the other term employed to describe the natural depravity of the heart, is derived from *יָבַשׁ*, *to be dangerously sick, incurable, desperate, malignant*. Comp. 2 Sam. xii. 15; Job xxxiv. 6; Is. xvii. 11; Jer. xv. 18; xvii. 16; Micah i. 9. The Vulg., without regard to the proper signification, *inscrutable*. Targ. *ܐܝܢܐ ܥܝܢܐ*, *calidum*, which conveys an idea the very opposite of that suggested by the Hebrew. The LXX. have mistaken the word for *יָבֵשׁ*, and render *καὶ ἀνθρώπος ἐστίν*. Though inscrutable by man, Jehovah asserts his perfect acquaintance with it, and his justice in dealing with each according to his deserts.

11. Bochart contends that *יָבֵשׁ* does not denote the *partridge*, but most of the moderns follow the LXX. *πέδιξ*,

Vulg. *perdis*, Syr. *ܐܝܢܐ ܥܝܢܐ*, Targ. *ܐܝܢܐ ܥܝܢܐ*,

the same; of which the ancients believed that she stole the eggs of other birds, and hatched them as her own.



In the midst of his days he shall leave them,  
And at his end shall be a fool.

- 12 A throne of glory, high from the beginning,  
The place of our sanctuary,  
13 The Hope of Israel is Jehovah :  
All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed,  
And those who depart from me shall be written in the earth,  
Because they have forsaken Jehovah,  
The Fountain of living waters.

See Epiphian. Physiol. cap. ix.; Isid. Orig. xii. 7. That **וְיִ** is a substantive cannot be maintained on the ground that the second syllable has a Kametz, as there are other instances of verbs with two Kametizes, instead of Kametz and Patach. See **וְיִ**, 1 Sam. vii. 17; **וְיִ**, Ezek. xviii. 12. We should naturally have expected **וְיִ**, but names of fowls are of common gender. The particles of comparison are omitted, as is sometimes the case in proverbs. See Prov. xxv. 12; xxviii. 15. Being aphoristic in its character, the statement here made was obviously designed to apply to all whose conduct it depicts, and is not to be limited to any particular person living at the time of its delivery. The point of comparison is the folly of amassing what cannot be retained. As the young birds soon follow the true mother, having left the false one, whose folly is then apparent, so riches which have been unjustly acquired leave their possessors, who are then exposed to the contempt of such as had formerly admired their splendour.

12, 13. By an accumulation of striking metaphors, Jehovah is represented as the only proper and unfailing object of confidence, and source of enjoyment. Hensler, indeed, is of opinion that the words of the twelfth verse are those of the Jews who, as in chap. vii. 4, boasted of their temple, and imagined that while it stood, no serious calamity could overtake them; but they are introduced too abruptly to admit of this construction. Neither could they have been applied to the temple by the prophet; for, so far is he from teaching that confidence in it would be a means of safety, that he

uniformly denounces such confidence, and repeatedly predicts its destruction by the enemy. The initial words of the thirteenth verse being in apposition with those of the twelfth, the whole is to be regarded as descriptive of the Divine Being who alone was entitled to the confidence and hope of his people. He is metonymically called a "throne," because he is the Universal Ruler, the throne being used to denote Him that sitteth upon it. Comp. Col. i. 16. He is the "sanctuary" of his people inasmuch as he is their refuge. See Is. viii. 14; Ezek. xi. 16. It is surprising that the words מְנוּחָה—מִן should not have all been combined as the predicate of the preposition by the moderns, since this construction is found in the Syr.

[illegible]

Arab. **כְּרִסִּי מְרֻقָּע מְגֻשָּׁנָא רַגְא אִסְרָאִיל**  
 both adding as the subject, **מְגֻשָּׁנָא**  
 and **אִסְרָאִיל** is an adjective derived

from the future of עָרָב, as וְיָרִיב, Ps. xxxv. 1, is from רָב. יִסְרִי would be the more grammatical form, but such change of person frequently occurs. יִסְרֵה before עָרָב is used in order more emphatically to mark the definite subject of discourse. —What is “written in the earth” may easily be effaced, and as contrasted with what is written in a book, or engraven

- 14 Heal me; O Jehovah! and I shall be healed;  
Deliver me, and I shall be delivered;  
For thou art my praise.
- 15 Behold! they say to me,  
Where is the word of Jehovah?  
Let it come now.
- 16 But I have not hastened from being a pastor after thee,  
Neither have I desired the desperate day—thou knowest:  
That which came out of my lips was before thy face.
- 17 Be not thou a terror to me;  
Thou art my refuge in the day of calamity.
- 18 Let my persecutors be ashamed,  
But let not me be ashamed;  
Let them be dismayed,  
But let not me be dismayed:  
Bring upon them the day of calamity,  
And let their breach be a double breach.
- 19 Thus said Jehovah to me: Go and stand in the gate of the  
children of the people, at which the kings of Judah enter  
and at which they go out, and in all the gates of Jeru-  
20 salem. And say thou to them: Hear ye the word of  
Jehovah, O kings of Judah! and all Judah! and all ye

in the rock, Job xix. 23, 24, most appropriately describes the transient and evanescent condition of those who alienate their trust from God to earthly objects. Comp. John viii. 6, and, by way of contrast, Luke x. 20.

14—15. The prophet, giving up the ease of his people as hopeless, now addresses himself to Jehovah on his own behalf, asserts his fidelity in discharging his duties, from which he had never drawn back before the most threatening danger, and imprecates the infliction of the Divine anger upon those who had treated him and his messages with indignity. For *לפני פני*, *before thy face*, ver. 16, comp. Prov. v. 21. All the utterances of the prophet had been delivered under a sense of the Divine inspection.

19—27. Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, and Maurer, are of opinion that this portion

of the chapter belongs to the reign of Jehoakim, who rapidly undid all the good which had been effected by Josiah, and among other evils encouraged the profanation of the Sabbath, with the due observance of which the prosperity of the State was bound up. The language of the prophet, however, is not oburgatory, as we should have expected, if the profanation in question had actually existed. It is rather that of caution and warning, with a promise of prosperity in case of obedience, and a threatening of destruction to the city in case of disobedience. It would seem, therefore, rather to belong to the time of Josiah, and to have been delivered in connexion with, or shortly after his reformation.

19. *בְּשַׁעַר בְּנֵי הָעָם*, *the gate of the sons of the people*, which is further described as that "at which the kings of Judah

- inhabitants of Jerusalem that enter through these gates.
- 21 Thus saith Jehovah: Take heed to yourselves, and carry no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in through the
- 22 gates of Jerusalem. Neither shall ye carry out a burden from your houses on the Sabbath-day, nor do any work, but ye shall sanctify the Sabbath-day, according as I
- 23 commanded your fathers: But they would not hear, nor incline their ear; but hardened their neck, that they might not hear, and that they might not receive instruction.
- 24 And it shall come to pass, if ye will diligently hearken to me, saith Jehovah, not bringing in any burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day, but sanctifying
- 25 the Sabbath-day, by doing no work on it: Then shall there enter through the gates of this city, kings, and princes, sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city
- 26 shall remain for ever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the environs of Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing holocausts, and sacrifices, and oblations, and frankincense; together with those who bring thank-offerings into the house of
- 27 Jehovah. But if ye will not hearken to me, to sanctify the Sabbath-day, and to carry no burden, but will enter in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day, then I will kindle a fire in her gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and shall not be extinguished.

entered," was, in all probability, *the Gate of David*, corresponding to what is now called the Jaffa Gate, and was called the People's Gate from the circumstance of

its being the principal thoroughfare for the tribes in the south, the west, and the north-west.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

In this chapter God vindicates to himself the sovereign and absolute right to dispose of the affairs of nations, according as their conduct accords or disagrees with his holy will. To bring this truth in a more tangible form before the minds of the Jews, the prophet is instructed to observe the manner in which the potter moulded the clay, 1—4; the emblem is then applied to the nations generally, and to that of the Jews in particular, 5—10. Upon this the people are called to repentance, 11; which call they obstinately reject, 12; their folly in preferring idols to the true God is next set forth under appropriate images, 13, 14; and the deplorable consequences of their foolish choice are vividly depicted, 15—17. After noticing a conspiracy which they had been forming against him, in consequence of the message he had delivered, 18—20, Jeremiah proceeds to appeal to Jehovah on the subject, and imprecates the calamities which he was inspired to predict, 21—23.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah, from Jehovah,
- 2 saying: Arise, and go down to the house of the potter, and
- 3 there I will cause thee to hear my words. So I went down
- 4 to the house of the potter, and behold! he was performing a
- 5 work on the wheels. And the vessel which he was making
- 6 of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; and he again
- 7 made of it another vessel, as it seemed proper to the potter
- 8 to make it. Then the word of Jehovah was communicated
- 9 to me, saying:
- 10 Cannot I act towards you as this potter does,
- 11 O house of Israel! saith Jehovah?
- 12 Behold! as the clay in the hand of the potter,
- 13 So are ye in my hand, O house of Israel!

3. *וְהָיָה*, more correctly according to the Keri, *וְהָיָה*—*וְהָיָה*, *the wheels*, or, as it is in the Dual, *the two wheels*, by which is meant the horizontal lathe of the potter, consisting of two wheels or round plates, on the upper one of which was placed the clay, which he moulded into vessels at his pleasure. These wheels were either of wood or stone, and were in use at an early period among the Egyptians, as appears from Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, iii. 165. What is the precise meaning of the word, as occurring *Exod. i. 16*, has never been satisfactorily determined. It is not found anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible.

4. *וְהָיָה* with *ו* instead of *ו*, is found in the text of fifty-eight MSS., has originally been in several more, and is now in five more by correction. It is likewise exhibited in seventeen printed editions, and alone makes sense. The mistake has, as frequently, originated in the similarity of the letters *ו* and *ו*. By an inversion of the order of the words in the middle of the verse, the pronoun is used before the noun to which it belongs—a phenomenon not without examples in Hebrew Syntax, especially in poetry.

5—10. However absolute the right of God to deal with mankind agreeably to his own good pleasure, his conduct is

- 7 If once I speak respecting a nation, and respecting a kingdom,  
To pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy ;
- 8 And that nation turn from its wickedness,  
Respecting which I spake,  
Then I will repent of the calamity  
Which I intended to inflict on it.
- 9 And, if again I speak respecting a nation, and respecting a  
kingdom,  
To build, and to plant,
- 10 And it do that which is wicked in my sight,  
Not obeying my voice ;  
Then I will repent of the good  
With which I promised to benefit it.
- 11 And now, speak, I charge thee, to the men of Judah,  
And to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,  
Thus saith Jehovah :  
Behold ! I am meditating a calamity against you,  
And forming a plan against you ;  
Turn ye now, each from his evil way,  
And reform your ways and your deeds.
- 12 But they said, It is hopeless !  
For we will follow our own imaginations,  
And will act, each according to the obstinacy of his wicked heart.
- 13 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah :  
Inquire now, among the nations,  
Who hath heard such things ?  
The virgin of Israel hath acted most obstinately.
- 14 Shall the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock in the field ?  
Shall the compressed, cold-flowing water be dried up ?

always in strict accordance with the manner in which they behave themselves towards him. Neither his promises nor his threatenings are unconditional.

12. נִפְּלָא, the Niphal participle of נָפַל, *to despair*. The meaning is : it is of no use to expostulate with us ; our case is desperate—there is no hope of reformation—we will continue to pursue the course we have taken. The language of the Jews involves the last stage of hardened wickedness.

13. No heathen nation was to be

found that had adopted foreign gods instead of its own. Comp. chap. ii. 10, 11. Such conduct on the part of the Jews was the more atrocious, since they had enjoyed the best means of knowing the only true God, and had the strongest inducements to persevere in his service.

14. Many parts of Lebanon are so high, as to be covered with snow all the year. This is specially the case with that portion of Antilibanus known by the name of Hermon, and stretching

- 15 Yet my people have forgotten me,  
They burn incense to vanity :  
And they cause them to stumble in their ways,  
The ancient paths ;  
To walk in tracks, in a way not raised.
- 16 To make their land an object of astonishment,  
An object of everlasting derision :  
Every one that passeth by it  
Shall be astounded, and shall shake his head.
- 17 As with an east wind I will disperse them before the enemy,  
I will shew them the back, and not the face,  
In the day of their disaster.
- 18 Then they said,  
Come, and let us form plots against Jeremiah,  
For the law shall not fail from the priest,

forward in the direction of the north-east division of Palestine. From the melting of the snow numerous perennial rivers are abundantly supplied, to which circumstance the prophet evidently refers. That *רֹקֶן* *roqen*, the rock of the field, is only a poetical expression for Lebanon itself, appears from the connexion ; and it is not likely the latter term would have been employed, but for its etymological import (*רֹקֶן*, the white mountain,) having been suggested by the use of *שֶׁנֶה*, snow. The sentence might otherwise have run : " Shall the snow leave the rock of the field ? " The mountain is here so called from its prominent appearance as contrasted with the lower, though in many parts, hilly open country of Palestine, from the south of which it is seen by the spectator rising into the clouds. The second member of the parallelism, doubtless, refers to the same locality, and embraces the numerous rivers and streams which flow without intermission from Lebanon. *מִצְרֵם* from *צָר*, to compress, straiten, is descriptive of these streams, as contracted within narrow channels while descending through the gorges and defiles of the rocks. The use of the verb *נָזַל*, Arab. *نزل*, *descendit loco*, confirms this view. Comp. Song iv. 15. *נְזִילֵי בֵּית־לֶבָנוֹן*, streams descending from Lebanon.

*נָזַל* properly signifies to tear up, or to tear down, to destroy : spoken, as here, of water, to dry up, fail. Comp. Is. xix. 5. The idea conveyed by the passage is the constancy of the course of nature, with which is finely contrasted the inconstancy of the Jews, who, instead of faithfully cleaving to Jehovah as their covenant God, had forgotten his claims, departed from his service, and abandoned themselves to the worship of idols. Such is the simple construction of what Rosenmüller calls a *locus vexatissimus*, and which certainly has greatly perplexed interpreters.

15. The nominative to *נְבִיאֵי שׁוֹרְרֵי* is the false prophets and idolatrous priests, understood. *נְבִיאֵי שׁוֹרְרֵי* is in apposition with *נְבִיאֵי*, and descriptive of the true religion which the Jews had abandoned. By teaching them idolatrous practices, these teachers and priests caused them to apostatize from the ancient paths which were prescribed in the Divine law. Comp. chap. vi. 16.

17. For *לְשָׁנָיִם*, thirty-two MSS. read *לְשָׁנָיִם*, and perhaps two more ; nine have read so originally ; and this reading is found in thirty-four printed editions. But all the ancient versions, Kimchi and Norzius, have read the word with a Caph, in which there may be, as frequently, an ellipsis of Beth.

- Nor counsel from the wise,  
 Nor the word from the prophet :  
 Come, and let us smite him with the tongue,  
 And let us give no heed to any of his words.
- 19 Give thou heed to me, O Jehovah !  
 And listen to the voice of mine adversaries.
- 20 Should evil be returned for good ?  
 Yet they have dug a pit for my life :  
 Remember my standing before thee  
 To intercede for them,  
 To turn back thy fury from them.
- 21 Therefore deliver up their children to famine,  
 And give them over to the power of the sword ;  
 Let their wives be childless and widows,  
 And let their men be killed by death ;  
 Let their youths be slain by the sword in battle.
- 22 Let crying be heard from their houses,  
 When thou bringest a troop suddenly upon them :  
 For they have digged a pit to take me,  
 And have hid snares for my feet.
- 23 But thou, O Jehovah ! knowest  
 All their counsel against me, to put me to death ;  
 Forgive not their iniquity,  
 Neither wipe out their sin from before thee ;  
 But let them be overthrown before thee,  
 In the time of thine anger, deal with them.

19, 20. A beautiful contrast to verse 18.  
 21—23. Every effort made by the prophet to reclaim his apostate countrymen, and even his intercessions on their behalf, having proved of no avail, he is at last constrained to denounce the Divine judgments. To render his language more

impressive, he throws it into the form of imprecation. Upon the same principle the imprecations in the Psalms of David are to be explained. For the Jod in יִרְדּוּ, ver. 23, see on chap. iii. 6. The conjugation is Hiphil, apocopated.

## CHAPTER XIX.

The prophet is charged to procure a potter's bottle, and go out with certain elders, selected partly from the estate of the people, and partly from that of the priests, to the Pottery-Gate leading into the Valley of Hinnom, and there, in their hearing as witnesses, to deliver a Divine message, condemnatory of the wickedness of

the nation, and predictive of its approaching punishment, 1—9. He is further charged then to break the bottle which he had taken, as a significant symbol of the destruction of the Jewish state, 10—13. The chapter closes with a brief denunciation delivered, on his return into the city, to a concourse of the people, assembled in the court of the temple.

- 1 THUS saith Jehovah: Go and procure a potter's earthen bottle, and take some of the elders of the people, and of the  
2 elders of the priests; And go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom, at the entrance of the pottery gate, and proclaim  
3 there the words which I shall speak to thee. And say: Hear ye the word of Jehovah, O ye Kings of Judah! and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem! Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: Behold! I will bring a calamity on this place, the ears of whosoever heareth of it shall tingle.  
4 Because they have forsaken me, and treated this as a strange place, and have burned incense in it to other gods, which they have not known, neither they, nor their fathers, nor the kings of Judah; and have filled this place with the blood of  
5 innocents: And have built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons in the fire as holocausts to Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake of, neither did it enter my mind.

1. *פֶּתֶל*, a bottle, so called from the gurgling noise which it makes on being emptied. It is clearly an onomatopoeic, derived from the reduplicate form *פֶּתֶלֶת*,

Arab. *بَقِيْق*; Root *פֶּתַח*, to pour out, cause a bubbling in emptying. Before *פֶּתֶל* supply *וְקַח*, and take, of which there is an ellipsis. LXX. καὶ ἀξέας. *פֶּתֶל* wants the *Vau* in three MSS.; it has originally been omitted in two more; and is not found in the text of two early printed editions: nor is it expressed in the Vulg.

2. The "Valley of the son of Hinnom" ran along the south side of Jerusalem, and was notorious for the human victims there offered in sacrifice to Moloch. Where precisely the Pottery-Gate was situated, cannot be determined; but it evidently opened into the Valley of Hinnom. The LXX., Arab., Syr., Aq., Symm., and Theod., all retain the original word, and probably regarded *פֶּתֶל*, *Harnith*, as

a proper name. It seems derivable from *פֶּתֶל*, a potsherd, earthenware, pottery. The textual reading is *פֶּתֶל*. *Vau* and *Jod* are frequently exchanged in Jeremiah. Our authorized version has "east gate," and in the margin "sun gate," supposing the name to be derived from *פֶּתֶל*, the sun, and the reference to be to the sun-rise; but this is less probable, though we have *פֶּתֶל* *פֶּתֶל* *פֶּתֶל*, Neh. iii. 26. The Targ. *פֶּתֶל* *פֶּתֶל*, the dung gate.

4. *פֶּתֶל* as the Piel of *פֶּתַח*, signifies to alienate, treat strangely, to regard as foreign, and expresses the alienation of a portion of the precincts of the sacred city to the worship of idols, which are elsewhere called *פֶּתֶל* and *פֶּתֶל*, gods of alienation, foreign, or strange gods. The horrid practice of burning innocent children to Moloch is expressly specified here, and ver. 5.

5. In highly anthropopathic language Jehovah declares that the burning of of



- 6 Therefore behold ! the days are coming, saith Jehovah, when this place shall no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of  
 7 the son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. For I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of those that seek their life ; and I will give their carcases to be food for the birds of the heavens, and for  
 8 the beasts of the earth. And I will make this city an object of astonishment and derision ; every one who passeth by it, shall be astounded, and hiss because of all her wounds. And  
 9 I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons, and the flesh of their daughters ; yea, they shall eat the flesh one of another, in the siege and in the distress, with which their enemies, and those that seek their life, shall distress them.
- 10 Then thou shalt break the bottle in the sight of the men who  
 11 go with thee. And thou shalt say to them, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts : Thus will I break in pieces this people, and this city, as one breaketh in pieces the potter's vessel, which cannot be made whole again ; and men shall bury in  
 12 Tophet till there be no place to bury in. Thus will I do to this place, saith Jehovah, and to its inhabitants, even making  
 13 this city like Tophet. And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, which are polluted, shall be as the place of Tophet, even all the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven, and poured out libations to other gods.
- 14 Then Jeremiah came from Tophet, whither Jehovah had sent him to prophesy ; and he stood in the court of the house of

human sacrifices in the Valley of Hinnom was such an atrocious evil, that he could not even have conceived it possible.

6. The name of תִּפְתַּי, *Tophet*, was given to this valley in consequence of its desecration during the reformation effected by Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10, and Jer. vii. 32. See my Comment. on Isaiah xxx. 33.

9. An almost verbal quotation from Deut. xxviii. 53.

10, 11. Now appears the reason why Jeremiah was commanded to take the

bottle with him. Comp. for a similar symbolical action, Jer. xxviii. 10, 11.

13. The royal palaces, as well as other houses, had been polluted by having had idolatrous sacrifices offered on their roofs to the planets. Such a practice obtained among the Nabateans in the time of Strabo : "Ἡλιον τιμῶσιν ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος ἰδρυσάμενοι βωμόν σπένδοντες ἐν αὐτῷ καθ' ἡμέραν καὶ λιβανοτίζοντες. Geogr. lib. xvi. cap. 3. § 26. Comp. chap. xxxii. 29 ; Zeph. i. 5, where see my Comment.

- 15 Jehovah, and said to all the people, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: Behold! I will bring on this city, and on all her towns, all the calamity which I have denounced against her; for they have hardened their neck, that they may not hear my words.

15. The "cities" of Jerusalem were the vicinity, such as Bethany, &c. LXX. the surrounding towns and villages in τὰς κώμας αὐτῆς.

## CHAPTER XX.

After having been incarcerated by the principal officer of the temple for presuming to deliver his predictions within its sacred precincts, Jeremiah was again set at liberty, 1—3; when he renewed his predictions respecting the capture of the city, giving them a special direction to that officer, 3—6. He then complains of the contemptuous treatment to which he was subjected from his countrymen, 7—10, expresses his confidence in the Divine protection, 11—13; but concludes with a melancholy lamentation over the fact, that he should have been born to undergo so severe a trial, 14—18.

- 1 Now Pashhur, the son of Immer, the priest, who was also chief overseer in the house of Jehovah, heard Jeremiah prophesy these words. And Pashhur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks which were in the upper gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of Jehovah. And it came to pass on the following day, that Pashhur brought out Jeremiah from the stocks; and Jeremiah said to him, Jehovah

1. According to rule, פָּשְׁחֻר, *the priest*, belongs to פָּשְׁחֻר, *Pashhur*, and not to פָּשְׁחֻר, *Immer*.

2. For other instances of the unapocopated form after the Vau Conversive, such as פָּשְׁחֻר, see 1 Kings xiv. 9; 2 Kings v. 21; Job xlii. 16. The cruel disposition of Pashhur is evinced by his having put the prophet into the מַכְזָּרִים, *stocks*, an instrument of torture, in which the neck, hands, and feet of prisoners were fastened, while the body was held in a bent or crooked posture, so as to cause great pain. Root פָּשַׁח, *to turn*. Symm. βυσσιστήριον ἢ στρεβλωτήριον. It was otherwise called by the Greeks πεντεσύ-

μυγγον ξύλον. LXX. and Theod. καταβάκτην. Comp. chap. xxix. 26, and 2 Chron. xvi. 10, where the prison in which the torture was kept is called מַכְזָּרֵי בֵּית הַיְּהוָה, *the house of the stocks*. The Gate of Benjamin was properly in the north wall of the city, in the direction of the territory of that tribe; but what is here so called appears to have been a corresponding gate of the temple, on account of which it received the name of the *upper gate*. Comp. 2 Kings xv. 35. It is further described as being in, or by the house of the Lord.

3. On being released, Jeremiah boldly announced to Pashhur the melancholy

- 4 calleth not thy name Pashhur, but Magor-Missabib. For thus saith Jehovah: Behold! I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends; for they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it; and I will deliver all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them away captive to Babylon, and shall slay
- 5 them with the sword. Moreover, I will deliver up all the wealth of this city, and all her gain, and all her valuables, and all the treasures of the Kings of Judah; I will deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and they shall plunder
- 6 them, and take them, and convey them to Babylon. And as for thee, O Pashhur, and all that dwell in thy house, ye shall go into captivity, and come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and there thou shalt be buried, thou and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied falsely.
- 7 Thou didst persuade me, O Jehovah, and I was persuaded: Thou wast stronger than I, and didst prevail: I have been an object of derision continually, Every one mocked me.
- 8 For whenever I spake, I cried out; I cried: violence and destruction! And the word of Jehovah was made to me The subject of reproach and scorn continually.
- 9 Then I said, I will not mention him, Neither will I speak any more in his name; But there was in my heart as it were a burning fire,

fate which awaited him and the other inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. It being customary to change the names of persons and places in reference to a change of circumstances, that of פָּשְׁחֹר, *Pashhur, Prosperity around*, was turned into מַגּוֹר-מִסַּבִּיב, *Magor-Missabib, Terror on every side*.

5. The primary signification of חֵזֶק is *power, strength*, but it also takes the acceptation, *wealth, riches*. חֵזֶק is a collective noun, denoting precious or valuable things, doubtless including here the costly articles of the temple. Blayney improperly explains the terms חֵזֶק, יָצַק, and נָסַח, of three distinct classes of the inhabitants.

7. פָּשַׁח is used in Piel both in a good and a bad sense, *to persuade, induce to action*. Here it is obviously employed in the former acceptation, though in the latter in every other passage, except Prov. xxv. 15, where it is found in Pual. The prophet alludes to his reluctance to accept the prophetic office, which it required powerful inducements from Jehovah to overcome. Chap. i.

8, 9. From the very commencement of his ministry, Jeremiah had met with opposition and persecution, and at times he was tempted to give it up; but he was compelled by a powerful internal impetus to persevere in the path of duty. נָסַח, being of common gender, admits of

Shut up in my bones :

I laboured to contain myself, but I could not.

- 10 For I heard the detraction of many, fear on every side ;

Denounce him (they said) and we will denounce him ;

All my friends watch for my fall :

Perhaps (they said) he will be persuaded,

And then we shall prevail against him,

We shall then take our revenge of him.

- 11 But Jehovah has been with me, as a formidable hero,

Therefore my persecutors have stumbled, and have not prevailed :

They have been greatly ashamed, because they have not succeeded ;

The confusion shall be perpetual, it shall not be forgotten.

- 12 O Jehovah of Hosts ! the Trier of the righteous,

The Discerner of the reins and the heart !

Let me see my revenge of them ;

For to thee have I disclosed my cause.

- 13 Sing to Jehovah ! praise ye Jehovah !

For he hath delivered the life of the poor out of the hand of the wicked.

construction with וְעִי, so that וְעִי is not necessarily the nominative, as Rosenmüller insists.

10. That וְעִי is to be taken as a collective, and rendered in the plural, וְעִי following clearly shows. וְעִי is literally, like וְעִי וְעִי, Ps. xli. 10, *the man of my peace*, and the meaning is: he who is on peaceable or friendly terms with me. Comp. chap. xxxviii. 22. Of course, as the context shows, the persons here spoken of were friendly with Jeremiah only in appearance: such as pretended to take his part, but were secretly his enemies. While others openly opposed him, these attempted by insidious methods to prevail upon him to be unfaithful to his office. Scheid, Schnurrer, Eichhorn, and Gesenius consider וְעִי וְעִי to be equivalent to the Arab.

صاحب الجانب or جار الجانب, *master*, or *protector of the side*, i.e. a faithful friend, whose aid and protection may

always be relied on; and construe the words in apposition with וְעִי וְעִי. The passage would then read: those *who were friendly with me, the keepers of my side*; but this construction encumbers the sentence, and is not borne out by Hebrew usage. Comp. for the use of וְעִי, signifying in a bad sense to *watch insidiously*, Ps. lxxi. 10, where וְעִי וְעִי, *the watchers of my soul*, corresponds to וְעִי וְעִי, *the watchers of my side*, or, of my halting, my fall.

11. Many MSS. and editions read וְעִי without the *Van*, and some MSS. have וְעִי. See on chap. i. 16. וְעִי primarily signifies *to look at anything*, then *to look carefully*, *to attend to*, and, as a consequence, *to succeed*, or prosper in an undertaking. The enemies of the prophet, failing in their schemes to effect his fall, had been covered with confusion.

12, 13. Expressions of grateful acknowledgment for the deliverance which he had experienced.

- 14 Cursed be the day on which I was born !  
 Let not the day on which my mother bare me be blessed !  
 15 Cursed be the man who announced it to my father, saying,  
 A male child is born to thee,  
 Making him exceedingly glad.  
 16 Yea, let that man be as the cities  
 Which Jehovah overthrew, and did not repent :  
 Let him hear an alarm in the morning,  
 And a shout at noon-tide,  
 17 Because he slew me not in the womb ;  
 Then my mother should have been my grave,  
 And her womb pregnant for ever.  
 18 Why is this that I came forth from the womb  
 To behold trouble and sorrow,  
 And that my days should be spent in disgrace ?

14—18. These verses contrast so entirely with those immediately preceding, that they are generally thought to have been transposed, and that the thirteenth verse properly closes the section. Grotius, indeed, Doederlein and Dathe, are of opinion, that the language is that of Pashhur, against whom Jeremiah had uttered a severe denunciation, verses 4, 6 ; but this hypothesis has little to favour it, and has been universally rejected by more recent commentators. Schnurrer, Eichhorn, and Dahler, treat the verses as a separate portion of the book, and regard it as altogether disconnected with the preceding context. Umbreit thinks the verses are merely inserted here by the prophet as a mirror in which we behold the image of his deeply wounded spirit, previous to his obtaining the deliverance from the Lord, which he had just celebrated. Ewald transposes them, so as to make them fit in between the 6th and 7th verses, which certainly removes all difficulty. As, however, they occupy their present position in all the ancient versions, and in all the MSS. and editions of the Hebrew Text, I have not felt at liberty to make any alteration.

The passage is so completely parallel with Job iii. 3, and following verses, that many have supposed Jeremiah had them before him when he wrote. That the sentiments are identical cannot be denied ; and it is not impossible that the words of the suffering patriarch may have suggested the expression of them. At the same time, similar utterances of strong feelings of grief, in which the day of one's birth is execrated, are so common in the East, that we may well allow the originality of the prophet's language. See Rosenmüller. While destitute of the sublime imagery employed by Job, this passage is not surpassed in pathos ; there is a unity and condensation throughout, which heighten its poetical beauty.

17. מִבֶּטֶן, "*from the womb*," not as if the prophet wished he had been slain as soon as born : this the following line forbids ; but what he means is : from the time when I was in the womb, including that time as the period when the act took place. I have adopted the preposition *in* as that by which the sense is best expressed in English. Thus the LXX. ἐν μήτρᾳ. The nominative in מִבֶּטֶן is מִבֶּטֶן in the preceding verse.

## CHAPTER XXI.

This chapter contains the reply of the prophet to a request sent him by King Zedekiah to make intercession with Jehovah for the removal of the king of Babylon and his army from Jerusalem, 1, 2. In the answer a direct negative is put upon the request, and the information is given that no attempt on the part of the Jews to prevent the capture of the city should prove successful, but that it should be delivered into the ruthless hands of Nebuchadnezzar, 3—7. The people are then instructed to surrender to the enemy as the only means of mitigating their calamity, 8—10; and, while the royal family are exhorted to desist from the acts of injustice of which they were guilty, and diligently to pursue a contrary line of conduct, 11, 12; the determined purpose of Jehovah to punish the inhabitants of Jerusalem is distinctly announced, 13, 14.

Venema, Rosenmüller, and Maurer, are of opinion, that this chapter properly comes in between chaps. xxxvii and xxxviii; and, indeed, a comparison of its contents with what we read in the first and second verses of the latter chapter scarcely leaves any room to doubt of the correctness of this hypothesis. What is here more fully related, is there simply referred to in the historical narrative. The occasion of the message sent by Zedekiah to the prophet was the temporary raising of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, in order to meet the Egyptian army which had come to its relief.

- 1 The word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, when king Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest,
- 2 saying: Consult now Jehovah for us, for Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, is at war with us: perhaps Jehovah

1. That this Pashhur was a different person from the Pashhur mentioned in the preceding chapter, is clear from the statements that the one was the son of Immer, and the other that of Malchijah. The only reason that can be assigned for the introduction of this chapter here appears to be, that the impression made upon the mind of the prophet by the conduct of the one Pashhur was so strong, that the very name recalled to his recollection that of the other, which led him to give an account of his mission at this place.

2. פָּשְׁחֻר. Here and in twenty-six other places, the name of the Babylonian monarch is spelt with Resh instead of Nun, while the orthography supplied by

the Nun is found only in ten places of our prophet. There is in this place a great variety in the MSS., besides other differences observable in the spelling elsewhere, as נְבוּכַדְנֶצְצַר and נְבוּכַדְנֶצְצָר. The great similarity of the letters: and נ will easily account for this. At the same time it must be observed, that while the LXX. write Ναβουχοδονόσορ, and Berosus (apud Joseph. cont. Apion. i. 19.) Ναβουχοδονόσσορος, Abydenus (apud Euseb. Præp. Evang. ix. 41) spells the name Ναβουδρόσορος, and Strabo, (xv. 1, § 6,) Ναυβοκοδρόσορος. Lorschach supposes the etymology of the name to be found in the Persic

نېو خدان, *Nebo deorum princeps*;

will deal with us according to all his wonderful works, that he may go up from us.

3 Then Jeremiah said to them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah :

4 Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Behold ! I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, with which ye fight against the king of Babylon, and the Chaldeans, who besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them  
5 in the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you, with an outstretched hand, and with a mighty arm, and  
6 with anger and with fury, and with great indignation. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and  
7 beast ; they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterward, saith Jehovah, I will deliver Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his ministers, and the people, even those who are left in this city, from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life ; and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword, he will not spare them, neither will he pity, nor show mercy.

8 And to this people thou shalt say, Thus saith Jehovah :

Bohlen in *נְבוֹ שֵׁדָא*, *Nebo deus ignis*.

—The king of this name here referred to, was Nebuchadnezzar II., son of Nebuchadnezzar I., Nabopolassar, or Nabolassar, who, on his being unable from old age to undergo any further hardships, committed the command of his army against Egypt to the crown-prince, by whom the Egyptians were defeated at Charchemish, and the Jewish state destroyed, as predicted and narrated by the prophet Jeremiah.—Zedekiah indulged the hope that Jehovah would interpose for the city in a miraculous manner, as he had done in the time of Hezekiah, see 2 Kings xix. 35, 36, and was anxious to obtain an oracular declaration to that effect.—*וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם* for *וְהָיָה*, which is found in many MSS. and printed editions without the Vau. See on chap. i. 16.—The phrase *וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם* means to recede from the incumbent attitude assumed by a besieging army. Comp. xxxvii. 5.

4. It has been doubted whether *וְהָיָה*, *them*, refers to the implements of war mentioned at the beginning of the verse, or to the Chaldeans as the nearer antecedent. The latter seems the more natural.

5, 6. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were to have for their enemy, not only the king of Babylon, but Jehovah himself, whose glorious majesty they had provoked by their indulgence in idolatry.

7. Reduced to a state of fearful imbecility by the pestilence and famine with which they were to be visited, they would fall an easy prey to the besieging foe. Seven MSS., and originally two more, omit *וְהָיָה* before *וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם*, and the LXX. and Syr. have nothing corresponding to it. It may, however, be justified by interpreting *וְהָיָה*, *the people*, immediately preceding, of the Jews generally as distinguished from the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

- Behold! I place before you the way of life, and the way  
 9 of death. He that remains in this city shall die by the  
 sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he that goes forth  
 and deserts to the Chaldeans who besiege you, shall live,  
 10 and shall have his life for a prey. For I have set my face  
 towards this city for evil and not for good, saith Jehovah: it  
 shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and  
 he shall burn it with fire.
- 11 And to the house of the king of Judah, say: Hear ye the  
 12 word of Jehovah, O house of David! thus saith Jehovah:  
 Execute judgment speedily, and rescue him who is plundered  
 out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go forth as  
 fire, and burn, and there be none to quench it, on account  
 13 of the wickedness of your deeds. Behold! I am against  
 thee, O inhabitress of the valley, the rock of the plain, saith  
 Jehovah; that say, Who will come down to us? and who

9.  $\text{לִּפְנֵי}$ , or  $\text{לִּפְנֵי}$ , is of frequent occurrence in Jeremiah, in the sense of going over to an enemy. The verb without either preposition is applied to David in reference to his deserting the cause of Saul, and joining Achish, 1 Sam. xxix. 3.  $\text{לִּפְנֵי אֶחֱיִישׁ}$ , to have one's life given to one for a prey, is to make one's escape with it, as a person does with whatever valuable spoil or plunder he may have seized; but which he often does with much risk and difficulty.

11. The Lamed in  $\text{לִּפְנֵי}$  is taken by many in the sense of *quod attinet ad*, but I view it as the simple sign of the dative, governed by  $\text{אֶחֱיִישׁ}$ , understood from ver. 8.

12. "The House of David" means the royal family, including the court and all in office about the king. It has been doubted whether  $\text{בֹּרֵךְ}$  is to be understood in the sense of *in the morning* literally, with reference to that as the time when the court sat for the trial of causes, or whether it is to be regarded as an adverbial idiom, meaning *early, soon, quickly*, as  $\text{בֹּרֵךְ}$ , Ps. xc. 14; cxliii. 8. Rosenmüller, *summo studio et prompte*. The pressing circumstances of the time require the latter interpretation. The judges, who frequently belonged to the

royal family, instead of neglecting the cause of the oppressed, ought to have been prompt in procuring for them the justice which the law afforded. Instead of the Chethiv  $\text{בֹּרֵךְ}$ , I have adopted the Keri  $\text{בֹּרֵךְ}$ , which is supported by many MSS and by the ancient versions, except the LXX. and Arab., which have nothing corresponding to either word.

13. By  $\text{בְּגִבְעֵי}$ , the valley, is meant the Tyropæon, running down between Mount Zion and Mount Moriah, on the sides of which stood the buildings of the citizens; and by  $\text{בְּצִבְעֵי}$ , the rock of the plain, Mount Zion, so called from its rapid ascent on the south-west, which renders its brow in this direction apparently more lofty than any other point connected with the city. (Robinson, i. 389.) The  $\text{בְּצִבְעֵי}$  was not any plain on the outside of Zion, for there is nothing in such locality specially entitled to this character, but the level tract of considerable extent on Zion itself, part of which is now a ploughed field. (Ibid. p. 390.) The valley and the rock are selected on account of their contiguity, and stand for the whole of Jerusalem. The propriety of the reference in this connexion, lies in the royal residence having been situated on Mount Zion, the occupants of which are here specially addressed.



- 14 will enter our habitations ? For I will punish you according to the fruit of your deeds, saith Jehovah ; and I will kindle a fire in her forest, and it shall devour all her environs.

14. ה in יְהוּדָה refers to Jerusalem understood, and the metaphor of a forest is employed to convey the idea of the dense mass of buildings with which the city was filled.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Much as the contents of this chapter may appear to agree with the latter part of that preceding, it evidently belongs to an earlier period, namely, to the first years of the reign of Jehoiakim. See verse 18. The reason why it occupies its present position seems to be the similarity of verse 3 with xxi. 12. It begins with a charge to the king and the people to execute justice, 2, 3 : with a promise of perpetuity in case of obedience, 4, 5 ; and a threatening of destruction in case of disobedience, 6—9. The irreversible fate of Shallum or Jehoahaz as a captive in Egypt is next predicted, 10—12. The selfishness and ambition of Jehoiakim are then denounced, and his miserable end predicted, 13—19 ; and after a pointed address and reproof to Jerusalem, 20—23, follow predictions relative to Jeconiah, the successor of Jehoiakim, 24—30.

- 1 THUS saith Jehovah : Go down to the house of the king of  
2 Judah, and speak there this word, And say, Hear the word of Jehovah, O king of Judah ! that sittest on the throne of David ; thou and thy ministers, and thy people who enter  
3 through these gates. Thus saith Jehovah :

Execute judgment and righteousness,  
And rescue him that is plundered from the oppressor.  
Maltreat not, and do no violence  
To the stranger, the orphan, or the widow,  
And shed no innocent blood in this place.

1. However elevated the royal palace on Mount Zion might be, it was properly regarded as inferior to the temple : hence the propriety of the language of descent in reference to it. Comp. xxxvi. 10, 12 ; 2 Chron. xxiii. 20. The prophet must, therefore, have been in the temple at the time he was charged to deliver the following message to the king.

2, 3. As it is evidently implied in the

exhortations here given, that the evils specified actually existed, there can be no doubt that the prophet has in his eye the oppressive measures adopted by Jehoiakim for raising the tribute which Necho, king of Egypt, had imposed upon him, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, and defraying the cost of the expensive buildings which he caused to be erected in Jerusalem, 13—15.

- 4 For if ye will indeed do this thing,  
Then there shall enter through the gates of this house  
Kings sitting for David on his throne,  
Riding in chariots and on horses,  
Each, his ministers, and his people.
- 5 But if ye will not hear these words,  
I swear by myself, saith Jehovah,  
That this house shall become a desolation.
- 6 For thus saith Jehovah respecting the house of the king of  
Judah :  
Thou art Gilead to me, the summit of Lebanon ;  
I will surely make of thee a desert,  
Cities uninhabited.
- 7 And I will consecrate destroyers against thee,  
Every one and his weapons ;  
And they shall cut down thy choicest cedars,  
And cast them into the fire.
- 8 And many nations shall pass by this city :  
And they shall say one to another :  
On account of what hath Jehovah acted thus,  
To this great city ?
- 9 And they shall say :  
Because they had forsaken the covenant of Jehovah their God,  
And worshipped other gods, and served them.
- 10 Weep ye not for him that is dead,

4. For  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , see chapter xiii. 13. Instead of  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , which, if pointed according to the consonants, would read  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , *his servant*, a great number of MSS. and two of the earliest editions, read  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , *his servants*, or ministers, according to the Keri.

6. By the house here is meant the royal palace, which, on account of its beauty and height, is represented under the metaphors of Gilead and Lebanon. The former was a region beyond Jordan, celebrated for the beauty of its scenery, the richness of its pastures, and the fertility of its valleys. The height of the loftiest part of Lebanon is about 10,000 feet above the level of the sea.  $\text{לִי}$ , *to me*, i.e. in my estimation ; and the meaning is, though thou art such in my eyes, yet

I will reduce thee to a state of desolation.  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$  is a formula of swearing, and expresses the certainty of what is predicated. Comp. Numb. xiv. 35, with ver. 28 of the same chapter, where the ellipsis  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , *as I live*, is supplied.  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$  must either be read  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , or  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ . The latter is preferable,—understanding  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$  before  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ .

7. For  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , see my Comment. on Isaiah xiii. 3. The mention made of Lebanon in the preceding verse naturally suggested the idea of the cedars which Jehoiaxim had procured from that mountain, and with which he had gorgeously adorned his palace. Comp. ver. 14.

10. In  $\text{לְעֹבְדֵי}$ , the Infinitive expresses intensity, and not continuance of action, as it commonly does when it fol-

- Neither mourn ye for him ;  
 Weep sorely for him that goeth away,  
 For he shall return no more,  
 Neither shall he see his native land.
- 11 For thus saith Jehovah concerning Shallum,  
 The son of Josiah, king of Judah,  
 Who reigned instead of Josiah his father,  
 Who went forth from this place :  
 He shall not return thither any more.
- 12 But he shall die in the place whither they have carried him  
 captive,  
 And shall see this land no more.
- 13 Wo to him that buildeth his house by injustice,  
 And his upper chambers by wrong :  
 That serveth himself of his neighbour for nothing,  
 And payeth him not his wages :
- 14 That saith, I will build for myself a spacious house,  
 And airy upper chambers ;  
 That breaketh out for himself windows ;

lows the finite form of the verb. The person for whom no mourning was to be made was Josiah, on account of whose death an annual lamentation had been kept up among the Jews. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. The language is comparative. Much more was his condition to be deplored who was detained captive in a foreign country, never again to behold the land of his fathers' sepulchres.

11, 12. The prophet directly applies what he had announced, to Shallum, whom Necho had dethroned and carried away captive into Egypt. That this Shallum was the same as Jehoahaz, which name he assumed on coming to the throne, expositors are generally agreed. Eliakim and Mattaniah in like manner had their names changed into Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, when invested with the crown. Shallum was younger by two years than his brother Jehoiakim, but was preferred before him by the people, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1; most probably on account of the ambitious and expensive habits in which the latter indulged as prince, and which he carried to the most extravagant

lengths after he had been invested with regal dignity. Shallum appears to have been a popular monarch, though he reigned only three months; and it is likely, from what the prophet here says, that hopes were entertained of his return from Egypt, in which case the people might replace him upon the throne, and thereby free themselves from the oppressive taxes levied upon them by Jehoiakim.

13. Jeremiah now directs his discourse to the reigning monarch. Though impoverished by the tribute imposed upon them by the king of Egypt, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 3,) the inhabitants were cruelly ground by Jehoiakim, who scrupled not at the adoption of any measures by which he might be able to carry on the building of a large and splendid palace.

14. בֵּית מִדּוּם, lit. *a house of measures*, i.e. a palace of ample dimensions. Comp. אֲנָשֵׁי מִדּוּם, *men of dimensions*, Numb. xiii. 32. מְרִחִים, *airy*, the Pual Participle of רָחַץ, *to breathe, breathe freely*. מְרִחִים, an unusual plural form, like שָׂרִי, מְרִי, מְרִי, מְרִי. One MS. has read

- Ceiling with cedar,  
And painting with vermilion.
- 15 Shalt thou reign because thou art eager about cedar-work?  
Did not thy father eat and drink,  
And execute judgment and justice?  
Then it was well with him.
- 16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy,  
Then it was well with him;  
Was not this to know me? saith Jehovah.
- 17 But thine eyes and thy heart are on nothing  
But thy lucre, and on shedding innocent blood;  
And on oppression and violence, to practise them.
- 18 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim,  
The son of Josiah, king of Judah:  
They shall not mourn for him, saying,  
Alas! my brother! or, alas! sister!  
They shall not mourn for him (saying)  
Alas! lord! or, alas! his majesty!

originally חַיִּים, and another reads חַיִּים. There must have been something remarkable about the windows here referred to, since they were deemed worthy of special notice. Michaelis thinks that blinds were intended. Ewald, in his Commentary, regards the word as being the usual plural, with the singular affix of the first person, *my windows*, as it is rendered in the margin of our common version, in which case it must be referred to חַיִּים, and חַיִּים to the workman understood; but in the fifth edition of his Grammar, (1844,) p. 339, he thinks it is probably a Dual. Gesenius also (in his Grammar, as improved by Rödiger) thinks it may be a dual form, signifying *double windows*, which would rather favour the interpretation of Michaelis—the blinds being two-leaved, as most of those on the continent are. Of this form the only other example adduced is חַיִּים, Ezek. xiii. 18, but חַיִּים, instanced above, and occurring Isaiah xx. 4, may be regarded as another. To agree with חַיִּים, חַיִּים should be pointed חַיִּים in the Infinitive absolute. חַיִּים, LXX. ἐν μιᾷ τῇ;

Vulg. *sinopide*; Syr. ܠܝܢܝܢܐ, *picturis*;

Targ. חַיִּים, *coloribus, colore Indico*: the ancient vermilion, a beautiful red paint, called *sinopis*, because, according to Pliny, it was first discovered near the town of Sinope, in Pontus. It was a preparation much valued by the ancients. It was composed of quicksilver and sulphur, and must not be mistaken for the preparation of red lead, known amongst us by the name of vermilion.

15. For חַיִּים, point, with one of De Rossi's MSS. חַיִּים. See on chap. xii. 5. The point in the appeal here made is the contrast presented by the showy and luxurious life led by Jehoiakim, to the simplicity of that exhibited by his pious father Josiah, who was contented with the necessities of life, and bent his attention to the proper administration of the affairs of the kingdom.

17. It appears from this verse that Jehoiakim indulged in the greatest selfishness and cruelty in his treatment of his subjects.

18, 19. There is a singular beauty in the manner in which Jeremiah brings home his charge to the rapacious monarch. He first describes him in the third person, ver. 13, 14; then, without naming him, he directly addresses him,

- 19 He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,  
 Dragged along and cast out,  
 Beyond the gates of Jerusalem.
- 20 Ascend the Lebanon, and cry,  
 Utter thy voice in Bashan,  
 And cry from Abarim;  
 For all thy lovers are destroyed.
- 21 I spake to thee in thy prosperity,  
 But thou saidst, I will not hear;

15—17; and at last mentions him by name in verse 18. The intrepidity with which he delivers the unwelcome message is such, as a consciousness of the Divine sanction alone could have imparted. For any uninspired teacher so to speak to his monarch would be rebellion. But the Hebrew prophets exhibited legitimate and overpowering proofs that their commission was from heaven. They and the Hebrew kings held by the same authority. He who had appointed the one class to reign, had equally appointed the other class unreservedly to declare his will. Of the disgraceful end of Jehoiakim, distinctly predicted in verse 19, we have no historical account; but it is thought, that he must have been put to death by Nebuchadnezzar on the retreat of that monarch to Babylon, and that his dead corpse was left unburied by the way-side, without Jerusalem. Jerome explains: *Pulchre sepultura asini dicit eum sepeliendum*, ut aliis verbis significet insepultum, hoc est a bestiis, avibusque lacerandum. Hæc est enim asini sepultura. Comp. xxxvi. 30. The hypothesis just mentioned harmonizes the statement, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, that Nebuchadnezzar bound him with fetters to carry him to Babylon, with the silence of the historian as to his treatment there. The declaration, 2 Kings xxiv. 6, that "he slept with his fathers," is no wise in collision with the prediction here uttered by Jeremiah, since it is not said, that he was buried with his fathers, but merely that he slept with them—a mode of expression commonly employed to express the simple fact of death, and not necessarily excluding the idea of a violent end.—Extravagant lamentations abounded among

the Hebrews, as among other eastern nations, over the corpses of the dead; and the mourners even went about the streets bewailing in doleful dirges the death of the departed. They likewise indulged in the sorrowful exclamations: "Alas! my son!" "Alas! my brother!" and the like. By the *אחתי*, sister, here mentioned, it is probable the Queen of Jehoiakim is intended, for, though she was not left without sepulture, like her husband, yet she was taken captive to Babylon, 2 Kings xxiv. 15, where no royal lamentations awaited her. *אחתי*, as well as *אחי*, is to be referred to the king, and not, with some, to the queen: the Holem, with Hê, being the less usual form of the masculine affix. See on chapter xxxiii. 16.

20. The imperatives here being of the feminine gender, the natural conclusion is, that Jerusalem, under the usual image of a female, is intended. The inhabitants are summoned to take their station on the highest points of the surrounding regions, whence their loud lamentations over the successive removal of their allies might be heard. *Bashan* was the northern part of the region beyond Jordan, and though mostly a level country, abounding in pasturage, yet there are mountainous parts in the direction of Hermon. *Abarim* was a range of mountains to the south of Bashan, opposite to Jericho. These localities are selected because they are distinctly visible from Jerusalem.

20, 22. The *lovers* of Jerusalem were the foreign princes with which she had contracted alliances, especially those of Egypt, on whom she had relied for help against the Chaldeans. Her *shepherds*

- This hath been thy way from thy youth,  
That thou hast not obeyed my voice.
- 22 A blast shall feed thy shepherds,  
And thy lovers shall go into captivity;  
Surely then thou shalt be ashamed,  
And thou shalt be confounded because of all thy wickedness.
- 23 O thou that dwellest in Lebanon,  
That makest thy nest in the cedars;  
How pitiable thou wilt be when pangs come on thee,  
Pain as of a woman in travail!
- 24 As I live, saith Jehovah,  
Though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,  
Were a signet on my right hand,  
Yet I would pluck thee thence;
- 25 And deliver thee into the hand of those that seek thy life,  
And into the hand of those of whom thou art afraid,  
Even unto the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,  
And into the hand of the Chaldeans.

were her own kings—an acceptance in which the term is often used in the Prophets. See on chapter ii. 8. In יִרְמְיָהוּ is a paronomasia. The force of the metaphor lies in its being the office of a shepherd to drive his sheep from place to place for pasture. The shepherds, *i. e.* the kings of Judah, should themselves be driven by the Chaldeans, who are here set forth under the metaphor of a blast. Comp. chap. iv. 11, 12, and Is. xxi. 1.

23. Jerusalem, or her citizens, might be said to inhabit Lebanon, on account of the quantity of cedar-wood from that mountain employed in the construction of the temple, the royal palace, and the houses of the principal inhabitants. For the Jod in יִרְמְיָהוּ and יִרְמְיָהוּ, see on chap. x. 17; and for יִרְמְיָהוּ, chap. ii. 20. In all the three instances the Jod is omitted in the Keri.

24. The prophet now turns to יְרֵמְיָהוּ, Jehoiachin, the son and successor of Jehoiakim. Besides here, and verse 28, יְרֵמְיָהוּ, *Coniah*, the shorter form of the name, occurs only xxxvii. 1. It is also written יְרֵמְיָהוּ, *Jechoniah*, xxvii. 20; xxviii. 4; Esther ii. 6. So far as he had an opportunity of developing his character,

he followed the wicked course of his father, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9; and though suffered by the king of Babylon to succeed him, yet, most probably owing to his having given some indications of a design hostile to the Chaldeans, he was only suffered to reign three months and ten days, when, on their return to attack Jerusalem, he prudently surrendered, and was carried away captive to Babylon. It was the Divine determination, that with this prince the succession of the Davidic line in the descendants of Jehoiakim should cease—so aggravated had the wickedness of that monarch been. Supposing even that Jehoiachin had personally been held in the highest estimation by Jehovah, such was his displeasure against the father, that for his sake his son should suffer in his public and regal capacity. None of his posterity ever came to the throne. The Nun in יְרֵמְיָהוּ is epenthetic. The change from the third person to the second is an enallage of frequent occurrence in the Hebrew scriptures. Seals, consisting of precious stones set in rings, were often of great value, as they still are in the East. Comp. Haggai ii. 23. It is the

- 26 Yea, I will cast thee out,  
And thy mother that bare thee,  
Into another land, where ye were not born ;  
And there ye shall die.
- 27 But to the land whither they set their mind to return,  
Thither they shall not return.
- 28 Is this man Coniah a despised broken vessel ?  
Is he a vessel in which there is no pleasure ?  
Why are they cast out, he and his seed,  
And thrown into a land which they knew not ?
- 29 O earth ! earth ! earth !  
Hear the word of Jehovah.
- 30 Thus saith Jehovah :  
Write ye this man childless,  
A man that shall not prosper in his days ;  
For no man of his seed shall prosper,  
Sitting on the throne of David,  
And ruling any more in Judah.

estimation in which they were held, that is the point of the metaphor in the present instance.

26. We are expressly informed, 2 Kings xxiv. 15, that, among others, the queen-dowager was carried into captivity. Contrary to rule, the article is omitted before *נָאֻם*; but similar exceptions occur chap. ii. 21; Gen. xxix. 2; Ezek. xxxix. 27.

27. *נָאֻם נָאֻם*, to lift up the soul, means, to cherish or exercise desire; to long for any object. Comp. chap. xlv. 14; Ps. xxiv. 4; xxv. 1.

28. Jehoiachin was yet young, and might have been expected to become an able governor: why then, it is asked, has he been set aside? The language is that of the Jews.

29, 30. The triple use of *נָאֻם* is to give intensity to the call, and thereby summon the most earnest attention to the Divine message relative to the termination of

the royal line, so far as the family of Jehoiachin was concerned. His being written childless does not mean that he was to have no posterity, but, as the latter half of the verse clearly shows, that none of his posterity was to occupy the royal throne. No son of his is found in the catalogue of Jewish kings. That Jeconiah had children appears from 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18; Matt. i. 12. It has been objected to the prediction contained in this verse, that the Messiah who was to sit on the throne of David was lineally descended from Jeconiah, as stated by Matthew; but, as Michaelis observes, it was only through Joseph, the husband of Mary, who, though his legal, was not his real father. Mary was descended from David, not through Solomon, from whom Jehoiachin and Jehoiachin derived, but through Nathan, the brother of Solomon. Luke iii. 31.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

This chapter properly consists of two sections; the first, from verse 1 to verse 8, containing—a denunciation against the wicked rulers of the Jews, 1, 2; a promise of the restoration of the people and the advantages of a better government, 3, 4; a prediction of the Messiah and the superior blessings of his reign, in which the descendants of both divisions of the Hebrew people are to share, 5—8. The second division is occupied with threatenings against the false prophets and teachers by whom the people were deceived, 9—32; and against them and the people themselves for the jeering manner in which they treated the messages of Jeremiah, 33—40.

- 1 Wo to the shepherds,  
That destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture !  
Saith Jehovah.
- 2 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel,  
Against the shepherds that feed my people :  
Ye have scattered my flock and driven them away,  
And have not looked after them ;  
Behold ! I will punish you for the wickedness of your deeds,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 3 But I will gather the remnant of my flock,  
From all the countries whither I have driven them ;  
And I will bring them back to their fold,  
And they shall be fruitful and increase.
- 4 And I will place shepherds over them who shall feed them :  
And they shall not fear any more, nor be dismayed,

1, 2. The shepherds here mentioned were the unworthy kings whose names are specified in the preceding chapter, including also Zedekiah, whom, for obvious reasons, as the reigning monarch, the prophet does not specify. In prophetic vision the Jews are viewed as already in the state of dispersion, to which they were reduced as a punishment for the reckless conduct of their rulers, whose alienation from Jehovah and confidence in foreign alliances were the proximate causes of their falling under the rule of foreign monarchs. *וְאֵל* governing the accusative, signifies here

to look after, to exercise watchful care over any thing : followed by *וְאֵל* it signifies to punish. This distinctive use of the verb in the same verse greatly adds to the force of the language.

3, 4. For *רֹעִים*, in the plural, the singular *רֹעִי* is found in forty-eight MSS., in one by correction, and has been in two more originally. It is also in four of the earliest and eleven other printed editions. Thus also the Syr. and Arab. read.—By the better shepherds whom Jehovah promises to place over his restored people, I understand Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, the Mac-



Neither shall they be missing,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 5 Behold the days are coming, saith Jehovah,  
When I will raise up to David a Righteous Branch,  
And a King shall reign and prosper,  
And shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.  
6 In his days shall Judah be saved,  
And Israel shall dwell in security :

cabees, &c., under whose superintendence and rule they were reinstated in their possessions, and enjoyed protection against both internal and foreign enemies. See my Comment. on Is. xi. 11—16. וְיָצֵא Ewald properly renders *noch vermist werden*, but unwarrantably removes the words to the margin, where they appear in smaller characters.

5, 6. This is almost universally admitted to be a prophecy of the Messiah. To no other, indeed, can it with any propriety be applied. The Jews themselves so construe it. Thus the Targ. וְיָצֵא מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד בְּרִיךְ הוּא, *I will raise up to David the Messiah of the righteous*; or, as it stands in the Antwerp Polyglott, וְיָצֵא מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד בְּרִיךְ הוּא, *the Messiah of righteousness*. Comp. וְיָצֵא מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד בְּרִיךְ הוּא, Jer. xxxiii. 15. Kimchi, BenMelec, Abenezra, Alschech, and numerous other Jewish authorities, adopt the same interpretation. See Dasso. Dissert. in Thesaur. Theol. Philol. p. 224, &c. To perceive at once the Messianic character of the passage, it is only necessary to compare Is. iv. 2; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12; where the term בְּרִיךְ הוּא, *Branch*, is used of our Saviour. See my Comment. on the first of these texts. Having in the fourth verse predicted a series of rulers whose characters should stand out in striking contrast to the kings who reigned in the time of Jeremiah, the thoughts of the prophet were directed to a still more illustrious Ruler, whom Jehovah was to raise up in future time, the distinguishing feature of whose reign was to be that of righteousness. To express the success of his administration he employs the same verb וְיָצֵא, which Isaiah uses to describe the prosperity of the Messiah's undertaking, lii. 13. The characteristic of the king, וְיָצֵא,

*righteous*, is that by which the Messiah is marked in other passages. Thus Jehovah calls him וְיָצֵא עַבְדִּי, *my righteous Servant*, Is. liii. 11; and, Zech. ix. 9, describes him as וְיָצֵא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, *righteous and having salvation*. The words וְיָצֵא מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד בְּרִיךְ הוּא Blayney renders: "And this is the name by which Jehovah shall call him, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS;" and rashly asserts, that he is morally sure the text as it stands will not properly admit of any other construction. With respect to the text, it stands as in the Textus Receptus, in all the MSS. and editions except four of De Rossi's codices, and primarily in two others, together with six printed Bibles, in which we find Vau Shurec instead of Vau Holem; in other words, the plural וְיָצֵא, *they shall call*, instead of the singular וְיָצֵא, *he shall call him*, which yields no support to the proposed rendering. To make וְיָצֵא the nominative to the verb is to contradict all Hebrew usage, according to which the name given, and not the person who gives the name, immediately follows the verb. See the Hebrew Concordance in וְיָצֵא, and my Comment. on Is. ix. 5. In the present case, as frequently, the verb is to be rendered indefinitely or impersonally: he shall call; i.e. one, each, or every one shall call; or, as it better suits our idiom, he shall be called. Even the plural וְיָצֵא is often used impersonally. The word is thus construed by Rosenmüller, De Wette, Dahler, Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Arnheim and Sachs. The LXX. render ὁ καλέσει αὐτὸν κύριος *Ἰωσεδέκ*, evidently taking וְיָצֵא for a proper name. The Syr., Targ., Vulg., and Arab. read וְיָצֵא in the plural.—In regard to the import of וְיָצֵא, a difference of opinion has existed; some

And this is his name by which he shall be called,  
JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7 Therefore, behold the days are coming, saith Jehovah,

supposing the meaning to be, that Jehovah would confer righteousness upon men through the instrumentality of the Messiah; which might either be taken in a lower sense, with the Jews and other Anti-trinitarians, or in a higher, with reference to the Divine righteousness on the ground of which God justifies the ungodly. The text would in the latter case be parallel with 1 Cor. i. 30. Others taking the words to be called in the idiomatic sense of *to be*, and applying them to the person of the Messiah, maintain that, as the incommunicable name Jehovah is here given to him, he must necessarily be strictly and properly *divine*. To this latter interpretation it has been objected, that in descriptive names, that of יהוה is applied to objects which altogether exclude the idea of subjective divinity, as יהוה יהוה, *Jehovah my banner*, Exod. xvii. 15; יהוה יהוה, *Jehovah will provide*, Gen. xxi. 14; יהוה יהוה, *Jehovah peace*, Judges vi. 24; יהוה יהוה, *Jehovah there*, Ezek. xlviii. 35: in which cases respectively the meaning is that Jehovah, the God to whose honour the altars were erected, would afford protection to his worshippers, would provide for them, would grant them prosperity, and that he would make Jerusalem the place of his special residence. To this objection, however, it may be replied, that whatever propriety there may be in thus interpreting the use of the term when applied to merely created objects, and however the rule might hold if the Messiah were simply a human being, yet the case must be regarded as altogether different, when, as we learn from other testimonies of Scripture, he is manifestly to be considered as possessing a strictly and properly Divine, as well as a human nature. While the text traces our righteousness to Jehovah as its author, it so connects it with the BRANCH, as THE SON OF GOD, as to involve the Divine dignity of his person, without which its existence is not supposable. The import and fulfilment of the words are set forth by the Apostle

when he says (2 Cor. v. 19—21): Θεός ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλάσσωσαν ἐάντῳ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν.—τὸν γὰρ μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γνωόμεθα δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. Comp. Rom. x. 3, 4; Philipp. iii. 9; and see the Rev. Dr. John Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, vol. i. pp. 270—276. Fourth Edition.—By *Judah* and *Israel* we are to understand the Hebrews literally, the same people whom Jehovah calls “his flock,” “his people,” and “the sheep of his pasture,” vers. 1—3; and who are described, ver. 8, as “the seed of the house of Israel.” These were now on the point of being carried away into exile; but Jehovah promises not only to restore them to their own country, but while in that restored state to raise up the Messiah, through whose righteousness they would recover the favour of Jehovah, and enjoy all the spiritual blessings which that favour entails. Against this interpretation it may be objected, that, so far have the Jews been from enjoying either temporal security or the blessings of a spiritual salvation, they have deprived themselves of both, and been a lost and exiled people during almost the entire period of the Messianic reign. But it may be replied, that notwithstanding this, the prediction shall yet have its accomplishment in the future. The remarks of Michaelis here are not inappropriate: “I certainly believe, that the Jews shall once, when converted to Christ, return to Palestine, and inhabit that land as an independent, flourishing, and powerful nation. I do not at all imagine, that Christ will reign visibly among them; but as we call their state under the Old Testament a Theocracy, so this future, free, and happy state, in which they shall have no mortal king, but shall acknowledge Christ as their King, may be called a Christocracy.” 7, 8. These verses contain a repetition of the promise made in verses 3, 4, and are almost identical in phraseology

- When they shall no more say, Jehovah liveth,  
 Who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt ;  
 8 But, Jehovah liveth,  
 Who hath brought up, and who hath brought in  
 The seed of the house of Israel from the north country,  
 And from all the countries whither I had driven them ;  
 That they may dwell in their own land.

9

## CONCERNING THE PROPHETS.

- My heart is broken within me,  
 All my bones are relaxed ;  
 I am like a drunken man,  
 And like a man whom wine hath overcome :  
 Because of Jehovah,  
 And because of his holy words.  
 10 Surely the land is full of adulterers ;  
 Surely because of a curse the land mourneth,  
 The pastures of the desert are dried up ;  
 For their course is bad,  
 And their strength is not right.

with chap. xvi. 14, 15. They refer to the same fact—the re-occupation of Canaan after the Babylonish captivity. For *לְבָנִים* some MSS. read *לְבָנִים*, but doubtless as the result of correction. See on chap. i. 13. Not only were the Hebrews captives in Babylonia, and the countries to the north and east of that empire, but in Egypt, Greece, and other parts of the East. See my Comment. on Is. xi. 11 ; Joel iii. 6.

9. *לְבָנִים*, concerning the prophets. That this is designed to stand as an inscription to what follows as far as verse 40, is evident from similar titles or inscriptions which occur in Jeremiah: as *לְבָנִים*, xlv. 2 ; *לְבָנִים*, xlviii. 1 ; *לְבָנִים*, xlix. 1 ; &c. The Masorites, indeed, have omitted the accent *Rebia*, which they have placed over the words in the other instances, and in accordance with their arrangement our Common Version has : “ Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets.” The Targ. has the same construction ; but the LXX., Vulg., and

most translations, among the modern those of De Wette, Dahler, Ewald, and Umbreit, exhibit the word as a title ; and of this Eichhorn, Maurer, and Hitzig approve.—In this verse and the following, the prophet paves the way for his reproof of the false prophets, by testifying the horror he felt at the dire threatenings which he was commissioned to pronounce against the professing people of Jehovah, whom those prophets encouraged in idolatry, by persuading them that God would not punish them on account of it.

10. The term *adulterers* is here to be taken in its tropical acceptation, according to which it signifies persons who had proved unfaithful to Jehovah by abandoning themselves to the service of idols. Contracting guilt by idolatry, they had brought a curse upon the land, the effects of which extended even to its uninhabited districts. That *לְבָנִים* is to be thus taken, and not in the signification of profane swearing, the exigency of the passage

- 11 Surely both prophet and priest are profane ;  
Even in my house have I found their wickedness,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 12 Therefore their way shall be to them  
Like slippery places in the dark,  
They shall be driven onward and fall therein ;  
For I will bring calamity upon them,  
The year of their punishment,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 13 I saw folly in the prophets of Samaria ;  
They prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err.
- 14 And I have seen what is horrible in the prophets of Jerusalem,  
They commit adultery, and walk in falsehood ;  
They strengthen also the hands of evildoers,  
So that none turneth from his wickedness ;  
They are all of them become to me as Sodom,  
And her inhabitants as Gomorrah.
- 15 Therefore thus saith Jehovah of Hosts  
Concerning the prophets :  
Behold ! I will feed them with wormwood,  
And give them water of poison to drink :  
For from the prophets of Jerusalem  
Profaneness hath gone out into all the land.

requires. The LXX. have read  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$  instead of  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , rendering, *ἀπὸ πρὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦτο*, and this is followed in the Syr.

12. Though the country had already been punished with drought, yet as no reformation resulted from it, Jehovah threatens the Jews with more condign punishment.  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$  is very expressive, being a reduplicated or intensive form of  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , *smoothness*, or *slipperiness*. Comp. Ps. xxxv. 6 ; lxxiii. 18.

13, 14. Wicked as the false prophets had been who encouraged the worship of Baal in the kingdom of the ten tribes, those who flourished in Jerusalem and the adjacent country were no better. In the very precincts of the temple, and in violation of all the obligations which its hallowed objects suggested, they not only were guilty of idolatry themselves, but taught the people to practise it.

$\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , verse 13, properly signifies anything that is the object of disgust, whatever is offensive to the taste ; anything morally offensive. Comp. Job i. 22 ; xxiv. 12 ; the only other passages in which the word occurs. Comp. the Arab.

$\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , *fatuit, non bene dentem reddidit ;*

$\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , *funus, sterces, alci feces.*  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$  for

$\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ . To prophesy in Baal, means to prophesy in the service of, or in connexion with the worship of that idol. To express the utmost depravity of character a comparison is made with that of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain. Is. i. 10.  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , the adverb governing a finite verb, instead of being construed with the infinitive. Other instances occur, chap. xxvii. 18 ; Ezek. xiii. 3.

15. For  $\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$ , see on chap. viii. 14.

- 16 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
Listen not to the words of the prophets  
That prophesy to you,  
They seduce you to vanity;  
They announce a vision of their own heart,  
Not from the mouth of Jehovah.
- 17 Saying continually to those who despise me :  
Jehovah hath spoken,  
There shall be peace to you ;  
And to every one that walketh in the obstinacy of his heart  
They say : no calamity shall overtake you.
- 18 But who hath stood in the counsel of Jehovah,  
And hath perceived and heard his word ?  
Who hath attended to his word, and heard it ?
- 19 Behold ! a storm of Jehovah is gone forth in fury,  
A whirling storm :  
It shall be hurled upon the head of the wicked.
- 20 The anger of Jehovah shall not turn back,  
Till he have executed and till he have carried into effect  
The purposes of his heart :  
In future days ye shall duly consider it.

16. The vanity to which the false prophets seduced the Jews was the service of idols, which, so far from procuring for them any advantage, only issued in disappointment. Comp. chap. ii. 5 ; Jonah ii. 8.

17. *אָמַר*. The infinitive absolute after the participle expresses the continuity of an action. The false prophets were incessant in their work of deception.

18—20. The prophet boldly challenges the pretended seers to the proof. To stand in the counsel of any one is to be familiarly and certainly acquainted with it, as the varied forms following in the verse obviously show. The language is borrowed from the custom of ministers or royal servants being present in a standing posture during aulic deliberations in the East. Jeremiah fearlessly announces the terrible judgment that was coming upon the nation—a judgment that should not cease till it had fully answered its purpose. *בְּיָמָיו* is an

imperfect reading for *בְּיָמָיו*, which the Keri exhibits, and is found in the text of a great number of MSS. and of several printed editions. *בְּיָמָיו*, the conjecture of Blayney, is altogether gratuitous. *סַעַר מְחֻחֵל*, a whirling storm, or a tornado, which descends with irresistible force, sweeps up whatever is movable on the ground, and, forming its collected masses into eddies, carries the whole into the air, and often to a great distance. *בְּיָמָיו הַבָּאִים*, future days, do not here mean the period of the Christian dispensation, which the phrase does when anything relative to the state of things in the course of that dispensation is the subject of prediction ; but simply time future, in regard to that at which the present threatenings were uttered—namely, the period during and following their execution. The Jews would not now reflect upon, or receive the prophet's message ; but, when his predictions had proved themselves to be

- 21 I sent not the prophets, yet they ran ;  
I spake not to them, yet they prophesied :  
22 But if they had stood in my counsel,  
Then they would have caused my people to hear my words,  
That they might have turned them from their wicked way,  
And from the wickedness of their deeds.  
23 Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah,  
And not a God at a distance ?  
24 Can a man hide himself in secret places,  
That I should not see him ?  
Saith Jehovah :  
Do not I fill heaven and earth ?  
Saith Jehovah.  
25 I have heard what the prophets say,  
That prophesy falsehood in my name, saying :  
I have dreamed, I have dreamed.  
26 How long shall it be in the heart of the prophets,  
The prophesiers of falsehood,  
Even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart ?  
27 Who imagine that they shall cause my people  
To forget my name through their dreams,  
Which they relate one to another,  
As their fathers forgot my name through Baal.  
28 The prophet with whom is a dream, let him relate a dream,

true by their accomplishment in the Babylonish exile, they would call them to mind, and acknowledge their Divine origin. <sup>על</sup> is used adverbially.

21, 22. The false prophets rendered it abundantly evident that they held no divine commission, by their encouraging the people in rebellion against Jehovah, and making no effort to recover them from their idolatrous practices.

23, 24. The deceivers might flatter themselves and those who listened to their seductive addresses, that, should the enemy approach, they might flee to a distance, and thus escape the punishment which Jeremiah had announced; but from the omnipresent and omniscient Jehovah, it was impossible for them to escape. They should find that he was present to punish his enemies in the

most remote regions of the earth, as he was in the land which he claimed specially for his own. Gesenius and Hitzig take <sup>על</sup> and <sup>על</sup> in their temporal, and not in their local acceptation: the former understanding the questions to mean a God of things near, and a God of things afar off; and the latter, a God newly come into being, and a God of ancient time; but neither mode of construction is satisfactory.

25—27. Jeremiah, impatient of the audacity of the seducing prophets, asks how long they should be permitted to carry on their deception. <sup>על</sup> is the plural construct of the *Niphal* participle, which, as different in form from <sup>על</sup>, I have rendered *prophesiers*.

28, 29. The prophets are called upon, if they really have dreams to relate, and

And he with whom my word is, let him speak my word faithfully :

What is the chaff to the wheat ?

Saith Jehovah.

29 Is not my word altogether like fire ?

Saith Jehovah :

And like a hammer,

That breaketh the rock in pieces ?

30 Wherefore, behold ! I am against the prophets,

Saith Jehovah,

Who steal my words, one from another.

31 Behold ! I am against the prophets,

Saith Jehovah,

Who take their tongue, and say : Saith.

32 Behold ! I am against the prophesiers of false dreams,

Saith Jehovah ;

Who relate them, and cause my people to err,

By their falsehoods and their wantonness ;

For I sent them not, neither did I command them,

Therefore they shall not at all profit this people,

Saith Jehovah.

not to feign them ; faithfully to announce the Divine message, if they had received any to communicate ; but not to pretend to what had no existence. The difference between their lies and the truth of God, was at once as apparent as that between the empty husk and the full ear of wheat. *כִּי-חֵפֶז עֵשֶׂה לָהֶם*, *What is there to the chaff as it respects the wheat ?* What is the one compared with the other ? The particle *כִּי* is here used in order to give special prominence to the noun. The anomalous use of *כִּי* in connexion with *וְ*, the regular particle of comparison, is designed to give greater emphasis to the simile. As fire consumes whatever is combustible, and the hardest rock is broken by the application of the hammer, so the word of God exerts its moral energy on the hearts of men. Comp. Heb. iv. 12.

30—32. In these verses three classes of false prophets are threatened. First, those who adopted certain portions of

the discourses delivered by the Divine messengers, and then distorted them to make them suit their own purposes, borrowing one from another, to screen their own poverty of invention, or spare themselves the trouble of composition. They were the prototypes of the spiritual plagiarists of modern times. The second class consisted of such as were mere babblers—attempting to pass themselves off for prophets, but bungling so in their delivery, that any one might perceive they were mere pretenders. They failed in the very enunciation of the introductory formula. Instead of the solemn *כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה*, *Saith Jehovah*, they could only give utterance to *אָמַר*, *Saith*, and then stopped. The word is properly the construct of the *Pahul* participle, and is equivalent to *the oracle of*. *אָמַר*, the verb itself, occurs only here : *אָמַר יְהוָה* : which the LXX. render *τοὺς ἐκβάλλοντας προφητείας γλώσσης*. De industria *εἰ* dicit vates, ut ipsissimam quam falsi pro-

33 And when this people, or the prophet or the priest

Shall ask thee, saying,

What is the burden of Jehorah ?

Then thou shalt say to them,

What burden ? !

I have rejected you,

Saith Jehorah.

34 And as for the prophet or the priest or the people

That shall say, The burden of Jehorah,

I will punish that man and his house.

35 Thus shall ye say, one to another,

What hath Jehorah responded ?

And what hath Jehorah spoken ?

36 But the burden of Jehorah ye shall not mention any more ;

For the word of every man shall be his burden ;

Since ye have perverted the words of the living God,

Jehorah of Hosts, our God.

phetic insincerity were expressed.—*Usser.* The feigning character of their utterances is significantly expressed by the phrase : *their telling their lies* ; *i.e.*, their employing it alone, and that to little purpose. They used it incessantly, holding whatever came first upon it, without considering what was to follow :—an example which has also had many counterparts in the pulpit. When it is said, ver. 32, that the false prophets should not at all profit the people, it is only another mode of expression for conveying the idea, that their ministry would greatly injure them. The third class were those who pretended to have been favoured with supernatural dreams, such as Jehorah had frequently employed for the purpose of communicating his will to mankind. The dreams of these prophets, however, were the mere inventions of their own brain, downright falsehoods. This class accordingly form the class in the prophetic representations. They were the worst of all.

33. Prophets, priests, and people, are now reported indiscriminately for the swelling manner in which they asked the prophet what message he had to communicate from Jehorah. *נגז* may signify

either *an oracle*, whatever respecting good or evil, though more commonly it is used of the latter; or simply *a burden*. Avoiding themselves of the ambiguity of the term, they profanely teased Jeremiah by asking what *burden* *oracle* he had next to deliver. He had predicted nothing but disaster : what new calamity had he to announce ? Jeremiah indignantly replies by asking in their own words : “ What burden ? ! ” He had warned that the previous message to communicate, that Jehorah had rejected them. They had obstinately persisted in their idolatry, and now nothing remained but their abandonment to the enemy. The LXX. dividing the words differently, instead of signifying, *What burden ?* have read *נגז* type, *Ye are the burden*. This division is followed by the Vulg. and by several of the moderns. The Targ. however, Syr. and most translators—among the moderns, Scholz, Maier, and De Wette, conform to the uniform reading of all the MSS. and printed editions.

34—40. Whoever would still persist in using the swelling term *נגז*, *burden*, perverting it in the spirit of derision, meet by his account with the punish-



- 37 Thus shalt thou say to the prophet :  
What hath Jehovah responded ?  
And what hath Jehovah spoken ?
- 38 But if ye will say, The burden of Jehovah,  
Surely thus saith Jehovah,  
Because ye say this word, The burden of Jehovah ;  
Though I have sent to you, saying,  
Ye shall not say, The burden of Jehovah ;
- 39 Therefore I, behold, I will entirely take you up,  
And will cast you,  
And the city which I gave to you and to your fathers,  
Out from my presence.
- 40 And I will lay a perpetual reproach upon you,  
And everlasting shame, which shall not be forgotten.

ment he deserves for mocking not merely the prophet, but Jehovah, of whom he was the messenger. Instead of נְבִיאִי and נָבִי, ver. 39, I have followed the punctuation נְבִיאִי and נָבִי, the former of which is found in two of De Rossi's MSS., and has been in four more originally, and has the suffrages of the LXX., Syr., and Vulg., and the latter in seven of De Rossi's MSS., originally

in eight more, in five of the earlier and four other editions, and has the support of Aq., Syr., and Vulg. נְבִיאִי assumes נָבִי as the root, which, though not occurring elsewhere, may have been in use in the time of the prophet as well as נָבִי, the common form. For נְבִיאִי, ver. 40, several MSS. and editions read in the plural, נְבִיאִים.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Under the symbol of two baskets of figs is set forth the fate of two portions of the Jewish people, 1—3 : that of such as had been carried into captivity to Babylon, to whom a happy return to and re-establishment in their own land is promised, 4—7 ; and also that of the refractory party, who would not listen to the prophetic messages, but formed a league with the king of Egypt against the Chaldeans, and are threatened with irremediable destruction, 8—10.

- 1 JEHOVAH showed me, and behold ! two baskets of figs, placed before the temple of Jehovah, after Nebuchadnezzar, king of

1. The initiatory formula, וַיֵּרָא אֵלַי, is found Amos vii. 1, 4, 7 ; viii. 1 ; where the only difference is, that וַיֵּרָא is prefixed. וַיֵּרָא properly signifies a boiler

or pot, but here, from its resemblance, a basket. The ו in the form וַיֵּרָא is only the mater lectionis used as a guide in reading the unpointed text. וַיֵּרָא, the

- Babylon, had carried away captive Jechoniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, and the carpenters, and the smiths, from Jerusalem, and brought  
 2 them to Babylon. The one basket had very good figs, like the first ripe figs; and the other basket had very bad figs,  
 3 which could not be eaten for badness. And Jehovah said to me: What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs: the good figs very good, and the bad very bad, which cannot be  
 4 eaten for badness. Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to me, saying:  
 5 Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel,  
 Like these good figs,  
 So will I regard the captivity of Judah,  
 Whom I have sent away from this place  
 To the land of the Chaldeans for their good.  
 6 For I will set mine eye upon them for good,  
 And I will bring them back to this land;  
 And will build them, and not pull them down,  
 And plant them, and not pluck them up.  
 7 And I will give them a heart to know me,  
 That I am Jehovah,

participle in Hophal, from  $\text{רָא}$  to *fix, appoint, place*. The date of the vision is stated to have been after the removal of Jechoniah to Babylon. How long after that event, we are not informed; but, had any length of time elapsed, Jeremiah would doubtless have specified it. The Nebuchadnezzar here mentioned was the second of that name. See on chap. xxi. 2. The artisans may have been removed, partly with a view to deprive Jerusalem of their assistance on occasion of another assault, and partly on account of the service which they might render to the Chaldean monarch at Babylon. Not fewer than 1,000 smiths and carpenters were carried to Babylon, on the occasion to which reference is here made. 2 Kings xxiv. 16.

2. For the Boccara, or early fig, see on Is. xxviii. 4.

5, 6.  $\text{רָא}$ , Hiphil of  $\text{רָא}$ , in which conjugation it signifies *to look intently upon anything, to regard with peculiar in-*

terest, and, as in the present instance, to have a kindly feeling towards the object regarded. Ruth ii. 10, 19. The removal of the captives was for their good, both as they were thereby saved from the awful calamities which came upon the rest of the nation, as their condition in Babylon was far from intolerable, and as they were cured of their idolatry. It appears from 2 Kings xxv. 27—30, compared with Jeremiah xxix. 4—7, that not only was Jechoniah well treated by the king of Babylon, but that the captives were in prosperous circumstances; at least, taking the two passages together, this may be inferred.—That the restoration here promised is not any yet to take place, but specifically that from Babylon, the circumstances of the context clearly show.

7. There is no ground to suppose that the promise and description of character here given, necessarily involve real spiritual conversion to God. From the

- And they shall be my people,  
And I, I will be their God;  
When they shall return to me with all their heart.
- 8 And as for the bad figs which could not be eaten for badness,  
Surely thus saith Jehovah :  
So will I give up Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his princes,  
And the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land,  
And those who dwell in the land of Egypt ;
- 9 I will even give them up to agitation and calamity,  
In all the kingdoms of the earth :  
For a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and an execration,  
In all the places whither I shall drive them ;
- 10 And I will send among them  
The sword, the famine, and the pestilence :  
Till they be consumed from off the land,  
Which I gave to them, and to their fathers.

representations furnished by the three last prophets, who flourished after the return from Babylon, we should not infer that piety prevailed to any great extent among those to whom they ministered ; or that, generally speaking, it amounted to more than the average estimate of national religion as existing among that people in the purer periods of the theocracy. All that the words, therefore, generally imply, is, that Jehovah would effectually bring them to renounce the worship of idols, and induce them to acknowledge and worship Him as the only true God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To cure them of idolatry was the object to be answered by their captivity, and when this was attained, their national restoration took place. At the same time, there is no reason to doubt, that there was a remnant of

the faithful among the restored exiles who truly loved and served Jehovah, and who were consequently warranted to appropriate to themselves the promise in the utmost latitude of its meaning. Malachi iii. 16.

8—10. The bad figs were a symbol of that part of the nation which remained in Judea during the reign of Zedekiah, and who, so far from profiting by the calamities which had been inflicted upon them, had become more hardened in wickedness ; together with such as, contrary to the express command of Jehovah, had fled to Egypt for refuge. Instead of bettering their condition, they only exposed themselves to greater miseries, both in their own land and in foreign countries. Wherever they went, they were treated with ignominy.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

This chapter contains a remonstrance with the Jews on account of their long-continued rejection of the prophetic messages, 2—7 ; a definite prediction of their conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, 8—10 ; the length of their captivity in Babylon, and the destruction of the Chaldean power, 11—14. Then follows a striking

symbolical representation, foretelling the punishment of the different nations by which the Jews had been oppressed, 15—29. The rest of the chapter is occupied with a repetition of the same subject couched in the forms of prophetic poetry, 30—38.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, the same was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; which Jeremiah the prophet spake to all the people of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,
- 2 From the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amos, king of Judah, to this day, these three and twenty years, the word of Jehovah hath been communicated to me, and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but ye have not hearkened. And Jehovah hath sent to you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending, but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said: Turn ye now, every one from his wicked way, and from the wickedness of your deeds, that ye may dwell in the land which Jehovah hath given to you and to your fathers for ever and ever. And follow not other gods to serve them, and to worship them: and provoke me not by the works of your hands, and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened to me, saith Jehovah; that ye might provoke me with the works of your hands, to your own hurt.

1, 2. The difference between the generally seven more, together with the statement here made, that the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar corresponded to the fourth of that of Jehoiakim, and that made Dan. i. 1, that it corresponded to the third, is removed by Hales (*Sacred Chronology*, n. 439), by supposing that the Jewish monarch was appointed king by Pharaoh Necho, on his return from Carchemish about the month of July, whereas the accession of Nebuchadnezzar took place Jan. 21, n.c. 604. So that the first year of that king was partly the third and partly the fourth of Jehoiakim. It deserves notice that it is here first where the specific chronological dates of our prophet begin.

Instead of *עַד הַיּוֹם*, *hæc usque* MSS., etc. *עַד הַיּוֹם*, the Infinitive, occurring, as it does here, at the beginning of a verse, can only properly be rendered by a finite form of the verb.

- 8 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts : Because ye have not  
 9 hearkened to my words; behold ! I will send and take all  
 the families of the north, saith Jehovah, and to Nebuchad-  
 nezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them  
 against this land, and against its inhabitants, and against all  
 these nations round about; and I will devote them to  
 destruction, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing,  
 10 and a perpetual desolation. And I will cause to fail them  
 the sound of mirth, and the sound of joy; the sound of the  
 bridegroom, and the sound of the bride; the sound of the  
 11 millstones, and the light of the lamp. And this whole land  
 shall become desolate and waste; and these nations shall  
 12 serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come  
 to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, I will punish

9. Some MSS. read נָחַר before the name of Nebuchadnezzar, instead of נָחַל, but I should rather attribute the change to correction, made in order to obtain an accusative corresponding to the preceding נָחַל. While this participle is governed by נָחַל, the preposition naturally follows נָחַל. In the LXX. and Arab. the words corresponding to "and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon," are entirely omitted. The Chaldean monarch is called the *servant* of Jehovah, because he was employed as his agent for punishing the Jews and the surrounding nations. Comp. chap. xxvii. 6; xliii. 10.

10. A graphic description of the domestic effects of a desolating army. Not only is there a cessation of all festive enjoyment, but what houses are left undestroyed are without inhabitants—a melancholy scene of silence and gloom. מִלִּיּוֹת, the hand-mill common all over the East. It assumes the Dual number because it consists of two circular stones, placed one above another: the lower fixed to the ground, and convex in the upper surface; the upper, concave in the lower surface to fit the former, with an aperture through which the corn is let down in order to be crushed between them. The upper stone has a stick or handle by which it is turned. Each house has its mill, which is wrought by two females; and from its indispensable necessity for daily use, its being taken

in pledge was prohibited by the Mosaic law, Deut. xxiv. 6. The נֵר, *lamp*, is likewise in universal use in the East. Every house has its night-light, and in Egypt the poorest person would rather forego his evening meal than be without it.

11, 12. שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה, *seventy years*. The number seventy being sometimes used as a round number, it has been supposed by some commentators, that such is simply the case here and in other passages where reference is made to the duration of the exile in Babylon. But that it is in such instances to be taken definitely of the precise amount of years, we are warranted to conclude from the statement made Dan. ix. 2, that that prophet "understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." If the number seventy were to be understood indefinitely, Daniel could have arrived at no specific conclusion as to the duration of the exile, nor could any certainty be attached to the numbers included in the period of seventy weeks, chap. ix. 24, which is evidently based upon the seventy years of the captivity. Considerable diversity of opinion has obtained among chronologers with respect both to the *terminus a quo*, and the *terminus ad quem*, of the seventy years;



- 16 nations to drink it, to which I will send thee; That they  
 17 may drink, and reel and writhe, for the sword which I will  
 18 send among them. Then I took the cup from the hand of  
 19 Jehovah, and caused all the nations to drink to which  
 20 Jehovah had sent me: Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah,  
 and her kings, and her princes, to make them desolate and  
 an astonishment, a hissing and an execration, as at this day;  
 Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his ministers, and his princes,  
 and all his people; And all the mingled people, and all the  
 kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the  
 Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the rem-

from Jehovah and pronouncing it against them. The last mentioned opinion is to be preferred. The metaphor of an intoxicating cup to denote affliction or punishment, is common in Scripture. Is. li. 17—22; Jer. xlix. 12; li. 7; Lam. iv. 21; Ezek. xxiii. 31—34; Rev. xiv. 10; xvi. 19; xviii. 6. *הַכּוֹפֶה הַחֵמָה* are in apposition, so far that the latter noun is used adjectively, as if we should say *the angry wine*. Comp. *הַכּוֹפֶה הַחֵמָה*, *the brazen altar*, 2 Kings xvi. 14; *הַמִּנְיָה*, *the beam-pin*, Judg. xvi. 14. According to rule, were *הַכּוֹפֶה* in construction, it should not have the Article.

16. *הַכּוֹפֶה הַחֵמָה*, *to be mad, rage*, from *כָּפַל*, *to be foolish*. The metaphor of the cup of wrath, is here resolved into the sword as the instrument of punishment.

18. The plural *כָּלֵלִים*, *kings*, is employed to include Jechoniah and Zedekiah, the successors of Jehoiakim, as well as that monarch himself. *כָּלֵלִים הַיּוֹם*, *as at this day*. These words may either have been delivered by Jeremiah at the same time as the rest of the prophecy, when, in the reign of Jehoiakim, the accomplishment of it had already begun to be experienced; or they may have been inserted by the prophet on the final revision of his writings during his sojourn in Egypt after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some have thought that the words may have been from the pen of Ezra, or of whosoever collected the books of the Canon. There is nothing corresponding to them in the LXX.

20. The words *וְכָל־הַמִּזְרָגִים*, LXX. *πάντας τοὺς συμμίκτους*, and all the

*mingled people*, properly belong to the preceding verse, and describe the auxiliary troops who were collected from different nations and tribes and served in the Egyptian army, together with such other foreigners as had settled in the country and intermarried with the natives. The term occurs first, Exod. xii. 38, in reference to the mingled mass which left Egypt with the Hebrews. Pharaoh Hophra, who reigned in the time of Jeremiah, was completely surrounded by foreign troops, which so embittered the native Egyptians against him as to occasion his overthrow. Nine MSS., originally two more, and one by correction, together with the Targ., read *כָּלֵלִי הַמִּזְרָגִים*, "*kings of the mixed people*;" but this is in all probability a mere emendation borrowed from verse 24.—*וְעִי*, Uz, occurring here in regular geographical order between Egypt and the states along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, is thought to be a different country from the Uz of which Job was an inhabitant, and which is universally admitted to have been in the northern part of Arabia Deserta. That here mentioned most likely lay in the northern portion of Arabia Petræa, between the sea and Idumæa, with which it is closely connected, Lam. iv. 21. Uz, from whom we may conclude it took its name, was a descendant of Seir the Horite, Gen. xxxvi. 20, 28.—The reason why *וְרֵשִׁית*, *the remnant* only of Ashdod is mentioned, is that that city had lost most of its inhabitants during the twenty-nine years' siege by Psammetichus.

- 21   nant of Ashdod; Edom, and Moab, and the sons of Ammon;  
 22   And all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Zidon, and  
      the kings of the maritime regions which are beyond the sea.  
 23   Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all those with narrowed  
 24   beards. And all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of  
 25   the mingled people that dwell in the desert. And all the  
      kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings  
 26   of Media. And all the kings of the north, both those who  
      are near and those who are distant, one with another, and

22. *w* is used collectively to denote the *islands and maritime regions* of the Mediterranean, where the Phœnicians had planted colonies.

23. The דֶּדָּן, *DEDAN*, here referred to lay in the northern part of Arabia, and was inhabited by the descendants of Dedan, one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 3, 4. There was an island of the same name in the Persian Gulf, with which that here mentioned is not to be confounded. See on Is. xli. 13. תֵּמָה, *TEMA*, and בּוּז, *BUZ*, lay in the same direction, and were neighbouring tribes. The country inhabited by the latter was that of which Elisha was a native. Job xxxii. 2. For בּוּז see on chapter ix. 25.

24. By אֲרָמִיָּה, *ARABIA*, here we are to understand the country of the Bedouens generally to the east and south of the Dead Sea. If אֲרָמִיָּה is not to be pointed אֲרָמִיָּה, and regarded as a repetition of the name just mentioned before, introductory to the epexegetis אֲרָמִיָּה אֲרָמִיָּה, it must be considered as descriptive of a different people from those intended ver. 20.

25. To judge from the position occupied by זִמְרִי, *ZIMRI*, we should suppose it was designed to mark out some nation or tribe to the east of the Arabian desert in the direction of Persia, but respecting which we have no further account, unless perhaps they are referred to by Pliny in his *Hist. Nat. lib. xxxvi. 25*: "invenitur hic in Æthiopiæ Zimiri; ita vocatur regio arenosa." The *Syr.* has ܙܝܡܪܝܐ.

*Zauras*, which corresponds to ܙܝܡܪܝܐ, the form in which זִמְרִי, *Zauras*, the name

of one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah, is expressed, Gen. xxv. 2.—עֵלָם, *ELAM*, or *Elymais* proper, lay to the west of Persia, and to the south-east of Babylon, but the term is used indefinitely in Scripture for Persia in general.

26. Having mentioned Media, the prophet stops short in his specification, and contents himself with a general reference to the less known, but numerous hordes of the countries bordering on the Caspian and Euxine Seas, commonly known among the ancients by the name of Scythians; and to give greater force to his representation, he comprehends within its sphere all the kingdoms upon the face of the earth.

We should have expected Jeremiah to have here exhausted his subject; but there remained one other power hostile to the Jews, to which it was necessary special prominence should be given. This was שִׁשְׁשַׁח, *Sheshach*, a name which has long perplexed the critics, but of which no satisfactory etymological solution has yet been furnished, least of all that proposed by Hales, (*Analysis of Chronology*, vol. iv. p. 69,) who would derive it from שֵׁ, the abbreviation of שָׁמַיָּה, the relative pronoun, and שָׁח, *to drink*! That Babylon is meant there cannot be the shadow of doubt, since it is used as its synonyme in the parallelism, chap. li. 41:

How is *SHEESHACH* captured!

And the removal of all the earth taken!  
 How is *BABYLON* become a desolation  
      among the nations!

*Targ.* מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל, *the king of Babylon*, *Syr.*

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܒܒܠ, *the sovereign monarch.*



all the kingdoms of the earth, that are on the surface of the ground ; and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

27 And say thou to them, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel : Drink ye, and be drunk, and vomit, and fall, and rise not again, because of the sword which I will send among you.

28 And it shall come to pass, that if they refuse to take the cup from thy hand to drink, then thou shalt say to them, Thus

29 saith Jehovah of Hosts : Ye shall certainly drink. For, behold ! I begin to inflict calamity on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be treated as altogether innocent ? Ye shall not be treated as innocent ; for I will call

If, however, it can be rendered at all probable that the cabalistical system of interpretation, known by the name *אֲתִבַּשׁ*, *athbash*, existed in the time of Jeremiah, and that he could have employed it, no difficulty would remain. According to this system, א, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, is expressed by ה, the last ; ב, the second, by ו, the last but one ; ג by ז ; ד by ח, and so on in regular inverse order. On this principle בבל, *Babel*, will be expressed by ששח, *Sheshach*. The principle is recognised by Jerome, who doubtless obtained it from his Rabbi, to whom it had come by tradition. To the opinion, that the prophet had recourse to this enigma in order to conceal the application of the prophecy from the Babylonians, it has been thought sufficient to reply, that it is refuted by the fact noticed above, that the name of Babylon is openly mentioned as parallel with it in chap. li. 41 ; but may we not suppose, that as the two predictions were delivered at different times, the one at present under consideration having been pronounced in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, while Nebuchadnezzar appeared before Jerusalem, and the latter after that monarch had returned to Babylon, so there was a well-grounded reason for concealment in the one case, which did not exist in the other ? That it was not beneath the dignity of inspiration to have recourse to the *Atibash* mode of expressing the name, is established by the fact, that Jeremiah would seem again

to employ it, chap. li. 1, where the letters *לִבְנֵי*, rendered in the common version "the midst of them that rise up against me," exactly correspond to *נְשִׁירִים*, the Chaldeans, and are parallel with *בבל*, Babylon, in the preceding clause of the verse. What corroborates this construction of *לִבְנֵי* is the circumstance, that in the 24th and 35th verses of the chapter the words *שְׂבִי נְשִׁירִים* occupy the same position and the same relation to each other as *בבל* and *לִבְנֵי* in ver. 1. That the LXX. so understood the word in their day, is evident from their rendering it, *τοὺς κατοικοῦντας Χαλδαίους*. Thus also the Targ. *אֶרֶץ כַּדְרָא*, *the land of the Chaldees*, in which *שֶׁשַׁח*, *Sheshach*, is rendered by *בָּבֶל*, chap. li. 41 ; and the

Syr. *ܫܥܬܚܐ*, *her inhabitants*, referring to Babylon preceding. So remarkable a coincidence of the letters of the alphabet cannot be supposed the result of mere accident, especially in the latter instance, where they are more in number and must have been designed by the author.

27—29. The destruction of the heathen nations was fixed and certain. No effort on their part to escape would prove successful. Of this they might be assured by the fact that the Jews, who were Jehovah's peculiar people, were not spared. For the sentiment in ver. 29, compare 1 Pet. iv. 17. — *יִהְיֶה תִּפְחָדִי*, *should you be treated as altogether innocent ?* The root *תִּפַּח* signifies *to be clean, pure,*

for a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of Hosts.

- 30 Thou, therefore, prophesy against them all these words, and say to them :

Jehovah shall roar from on high,  
And utter his voice from his holy abode :  
He shall roar aloud over his pasturage ;  
A shout, like that of those who tread out the grapes,  
He shall raise against all the inhabitants of the earth.

- 31 A noise is come to the extremity of the earth,  
For Jehovah hath a cause of judgment with the nations,  
He will hold judgment with all flesh :  
As for the wicked, he will deliver them to the sword,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 32 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :  
Behold ! calamity shall go forth from nation to nation,  
And a great storm shall be raised  
From the uttermost regions of the earth.

- 33 And the slain of Jehovah shall be in that day  
From one extremity of the earth even to the other,  
They shall not be mourned for, nor collected, nor buried,  
They shall be for manure on the surface of the ground.

- 34 Howl, O ye shepherds ! and cry,  
And roll yourselves in the dust,  
O ye chiefs of the flock !  
For your days for slaughter are accomplished,  
And your dispersions,  
And ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel.

in Niphal and Piel, *to regard or treat as pure* in a moral sense, *to let go unpunished*. The meaning of the prophet, therefore, is, that the hostile powers should certainly be punished.

30—33. From verse 30 to the end of the chapter the same subject is continued, only it is thrown into the more animated forms of prophetic poetry. Under the metaphor of a lion, Jehovah is represented as giving forth a tremendous roar, indicative of the inevitable destruction which was to overtake the nations. The roar was first to be heard over

Judea, considered as the pasturage allotted by Jehovah to his people, and then it was to go forth into heathen lands. *רָעַע* signifies both *habitation* and *pasture*. The latter signification is preferable here, the flock occupying it being the object of attack on the part of the lion. For *רָעַע*, the vintage-shout, see on Is. xvi. 9, 10.

34—36. The kings and other rulers are here addressed, who were to be involved in the same ruin with the nations over which they presided. *רָעַע*, with *Hirik*, gives the first person sin-

- 35 And flight shall fail the shepherds,  
And escape the chiefs of the flock.  
36 The sound of the cry of the shepherds,  
And the howl of the chiefs of the flock :  
Because Jehovah destroyeth their flock.  
37 Yea, the peaceful pastures are destroyed,  
By reason of the fierce anger of Jehovah.  
38 He hath quitted, like a young lion, his covert ;  
Surely their land hath become desolate  
By reason of the cruel sword,  
And by reason of the fierceness of his anger.

gular of a verb, which some have considered to be פָּרַח in the unusual Tiplil conjugation ; but פָּרַח, with *Tere*, as a feminine noun, is more firmly based, and is supported by thirty-five of De Rossi's MSS., by six more originally, thirteen by correction ; by six of the earlier, and twenty-seven other printed editions ; and by Aq., Symm., Theod., Vulg., and the Hexaplar Syr. It equally well suits the connexion : the meaning being that the period had fully arrived when the kings and nobles were to be scattered as dust before the wind. However highly they may have been held in estimation, they should fall like a costly vessel, and be broken in pieces. For כִּימִי, like a vessel of desire, or precious vessel, some would read כִּימִי, like lovely lambs. The LXX., indeed, has ὡς περ οἱ κριοὶ οἱ ἐκλεκτοί, but the reference in the connexion is to the shepherds throughout, and not to the flocks as a separate class.

37. יְאִיִּם הַשְׁלֵמִים, the pastures of peace, denote the secure abodes of the inhabitants of the countries, where they peaceably enjoyed the fruits of their industry

under the protection of their respective governments.

38. Twelve MSS., originally six more, now two, the Sonc. Edition, the LXX., Arab., and Targ. read חֶרֶב, sword, instead of חֶרֶף, fierceness. The same form חֶרֶף occurs chap. xlv. 16 ; l. 16. חֶרֶף is a participial adjective qualifying חֶרֶב, which is feminine. To render the word *oppressor*, as some have done, it must be pointed חֶרֶף in the masculine. The last clause of the verse, corresponding to that of the preceding, shows that the pronominal reference in אִמִּי is חֶרֶב, and not חֶרֶף. There can, therefore, be no foundation for the supposition, that the Chaldean power is the subject, though it has been held, that, as יְאִיִּם also signifies a dove, (and as it is believed on the authority of Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. cap. 4, that the Assyrians and Babylonians had the figure of a dove on their standards, in commemoration of Semiramis' having been nourished by birds, especially by young doves, when exposed after her birth,) such construction is to be adopted here. Hence the rendering of the Vulg. *iræ columbæ*.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

On announcing what he had been charged by Jehovah faithfully to deliver, 1—6, Jeremiah is accused of sedition, and declared worthy of death, 7—11. But, on his protesting against the injustice of the accusation, 12—15, some of the elders adduce the cases of the prophets Micah and Urijah, who had delivered similar

prophecies, the former of whom had been protected by King Hezekiah, 16—19; and the latter, after having been brought back from Egypt, was executed by order of Jehoiakim, 20—23. By the powerful influence of Ahikam, the prophet is rescued, 24.

- 1 IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word was communicated from Jehovah,
- 2 saying: Thus saith Jehovah: Stand in the court of the house of Jehovah, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the house of Jehovah, all the words which I have commanded thee to speak to them: withhold not a word.
- 3 Perhaps they will hear, and turn every one from his wicked way, that I may repent of the calamity which I have intended to inflict on them, because of the wickedness of their deeds.
- 4 And thou shalt say to them, Thus saith Jehovah: If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law which I have set
- 5 before you: to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I have sent to you, even rising early and
- 6 sending, but ye have not hearkened; Then I will make this house like Shiloh, and this city I will make an execration to all the nations of the earth.
- 7 And the priests and the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Jehovah.
- 8 And it came to pass when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak to all the people, that the priests, and the prophets, and all the people
- 9 seized him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall

1. The events which are narrated in this section took place about three years previous to the delivery of the prophecy contained in the preceding chapter. Maurer is of opinion that the predictions which are here stated to have given so much offence, are those contained in chaps. vii. viii. ix.—an opinion which is confirmed by the coincidence of verse 6 with chap. vii. 12, 14. They must have been pronounced on occasion of one of the great festivals, (according to Archbishop Usher, that of tabernacles,) since the inhabitants of all the cities of Judah

are represented as having been present. Ver. 2.

6. הַיִּשָּׁרִים is anomalous; but whether the הַיִּ at the end of the word be a mere error of transcription, or the הַיִּ paragogic, employed for the sake of giving greater emphasis, cannot be determined. It is, however, not found in forty MSS. and three editions, and is most probably an addition to the text.

7. The prophets here referred to were the false prophets, the *ψευδοπροφήται*, as in the LXX.

8, 9. The tumult appears to have been

be like Shiloh, and this city shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant? and all the people were collected against Jeremiah in the house of Jehovah.

- 10 And when the princes of Judah heard of these things, they went up from the king's house to the house of Jehovah, and
- 11 sat in the entrance of the new gate of the house of Jehovah. And the priests and the prophets spake to the princes, and to all the people, saying, This man deserves the sentence of death, for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your own ears.
- 12 Then Jeremiah spake to all the princes, and to all the people, saying: Jehovah hath sent me to prophesy against this house, and against this city, all the words which ye have
- 13 heard. Now, therefore, reform your ways and your deeds, and hearken to the voice of Jehovah your God, that Jehovah may repent concerning the calamity with which he hath
- 14 threatened you. But as for me, behold! I am in your hand,
- 15 do to me as may appear good and proper to you. Only know assuredly, that if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent blood on yourselves, and on this city, and on its inhabitants; for in truth Jehovah hath sent me to you, to speak in your hearing all these words.
- 16 Then said the princes, and all the people, to the priests, and to the prophets, This man deserves not the sentence of death, for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God.
- 17 And certain men of the elders of the land rose up, and spake
- 18 to the whole assembly of the people, saying, Micah the Morashthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of

raised against Jeremiah by the priests and prophets, who accused him of uttering falsehood in the name of Jehovah, a crime which was threatened in the law of Moses with death, Deut. xviii. 20.

10. The members of the council of state, which had been sitting in the royal palace, on hearing of the tumult, repaired to the temple, in the gate of which they held a judicial court for the trial of the cause. The word בית, *house*, appears to have been omitted before בית. It is found in twenty-seven MSS. and has been originally in several more, and is

translated in the Targ., Syr., Vulg., and Arab. Which gate of the temple is here intended, it is impossible to determine; but it is thought, all that is meant by its being called new, is, its having recently been repaired.

11. The crime of which Jeremiah was accused, was doubtless that of constructive blasphemy, because he had spoken against the city which contained the sacred temple of Jehovah. A parallel instance occurs, Acts vi. 11—13.

18. See on Micah iii. 12. Many MSS. omit the Yod in בית.

Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :

Sion shall be ploughed as a field,

Jerusalem shall become heaps,

And the mountain of the house woody heights.

- 19 Did Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah, proceed to put him to death? Did he not fear Jehovah, and supplicate the favour of Jehovah, and Jehovah repented concerning the calamity with which he had threatened them? and we should commit great wickedness against our own souls.
- 20 And there was also a man that was prophesying in the name of Jehovah, Urijah, the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, and he prophesied against this city, and against this land,
- 21 according to all the words of Jeremiah. And Jehoiakim the king, and all his heroes, and all the princes, heard his words, and the king sought to kill him; but Urijah heard of it, and
- 22 was afraid, and fled, and came into Egypt. But Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt, even Elnathan, the son of
- 23 Achbor, and certain men with him to Egypt. And they brought Urijah out from Egypt, and brought him to Jehoiakim the king, and he slew him with the sword, and caused his dead body to be cast into the graves of the sons of the people.
- 24 But the hand of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, was with Jeremiah, that he might not be delivered into the hand of the people, to put him to death.

20. The circumstances detailed in this and the three following verses appear to have been adduced in opposition to what had been related respecting Micah; and as they had taken place in the reign of the present monarch, they furnished an apt precedent for the condemnation of Jeremiah. Of this Urijah we have no further notice. *קִרְיַת יְעָרִים, Kirjath-jearim*, lay on the confines of Judah and Benjamin, about three hours west of Jerusalem.

23. *עַם, people*, in the phrase *עַם הָאָרֶץ, sons of the people*, is evidently to be taken in the sense of the Arab. *أهل*, *plebs*, the common people. It has been thought by some, that the Jewish pro-

phets had a separate cemetery, and this seems almost to be implied in what is said of their tombs, Matt. xxiii. 29. Urijah not only fell by the hand of the executioner, but his corpse was treated with indignity. Comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 6.

24. The prophet was in the greatest danger of losing his life on the present occasion, and doubtless would have fallen a victim to the fury of the people under the colour of law, had it not been for the noble interposition of Ahikam. This person, whose father Shaphan was probably royal secretary, must have been of some consideration at court, since it was owing to his influence that Jeremiah was rescued.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

The prophet is charged to announce, by a striking symbolical action, to the foreign ambassadors, who had come to induce the king of Judah to join in a confederacy against Nebuchadnezzar, the futility of their project, and the certainty that their princes would be subjected to that monarch, 1—8. After warning them not to be deceived by their idolatrous prophets, 9—11, he specially applies the subject to his own monarch, 12—15; and then addresses himself to the priests and the body of the people, for the purpose of preventing their being deceived by the false representations which were made by the pseudo-prophets, respecting the captivity, 16—22.

- 1 IN the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah king of Judah, this word was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying :
- 2 Thus saith Jehovah to me, Make thee bonds and yokes, and
- 3 put them on thy neck. And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the sons of Ammon, and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers who come to Jerusalem
- 4 to Zedekiah, king of Judah. And give them a charge to their masters, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God

1. That the name יְהוֹיָכִים, *Jehoiakim*, has been substituted by some ancient copyist for זְדַבְיָהּ, *Zedekiah*, I cannot entertain a doubt. The substitution was in all probability originated by the words בְּרִאשִׁית מַלְכוּתוֹ יְהוֹיָכִים, occurring at the beginning of the preceding chapter. On the authority of the reference, chap. xxviii. 1; on that of the statements made in the chapter itself, vers. 3 and 12; and on that of one of Kennicott's MSS.; another at first hand, and the marginal reading of a third, together with the support of the Syr. and Arab. versions (the latter as contained in an Oxford MS.), I have not hesitated to adopt Zedekiah in the translation. In this I have the sanction of Lowth, Blayney, Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Dahler, Maurer, Umbreit, and Ewald.

2, 3. Though the handing of the cup, chap. xxv. 15, was merely a symbolical mode of representation in the language of prophecy, yet as Hananiah took the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah, and

brake it, chap. xxviii. 10, 11, it is clear that he must actually have worn it in public, as a symbol of the subjection to the king of Babylon, in which the nations specified were to be held. Comp. for similar symbolical actions on the part of the prophets, Is. xx. 1, 3, 4; Ezek. xii. 3, 11, 18. That the bonds and yokes were also literally delivered to the foreign ambassadors to convey to their respective masters, there is no reason to doubt. In like manner, when Idanthyrsus, king of the Scythians, sent to Darius, who had crossed the Ister and was penetrating into the country, and dared him to do his worst, it was not by letter, but symbolically by forwarding to him a mouse, a frog, a bird, an arrow, and a plough. Clem. Alex. Stromata, p. 567. The מִצָּדָה was properly the curved piece of wood which rested on the neck and shoulders of oxen when employed for labour, but the word is used here to denote the collar which was fastened round the necks of prisoners or

- 5 of Israel. Thus shall ye say to your masters: I have made the earth, the men and the beasts that are on the surface of the earth, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and I have given it to whom it seemed proper to me. And now, I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant; and also the beasts of the field I have given to him, to serve him. And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son; till the very time of his land come: then many nations and great kings shall reduce him to servitude. And it shall be, that as for the nation and the kingdom that will not serve him, even Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation, saith Jehovah, with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, till I have consumed them by his hand.
- 9 Listen not, therefore, to your prophets, and to your diviners, and to your dreamers, and to your augurers, and to your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, Ye shall not serve the

slaves, and to which their chains were attached.

6. The mention of the wild beasts is designed to convey the idea of the unlimited extent of Nebuchadnezzar's empire. The most uncultivated regions, the densest forests, and the most inaccessible mountains, to which his enemies might flee for safety, were all subject to his sway. (Michaelis.)

7. The Babylonian history being involved in considerable obscurity, a difficulty has been found in exactly determining who were the successors of Nebuchadnezzar. It is, however, generally agreed that they were Evilmerodach, Neriglissar, Labosodarchus and Belshazzar; and thus, at first sight, there would appear to be a discrepancy between the prediction and the history; but though Neriglissar and Labosodarchus reigned at Babylon, they are both to be struck out of the list of the successors of Nebuchadnezzar in the male line, Neriglissar being only allied to him by having married the sister of Evilmerodach; so that Nabonned or Belshazzar

was strictly and properly the grandson of the great Chaldean monarch. As his lineal descendant he is repeatedly recognised, Dan. v. 2. 11, 13. While לְעַבְדָּם, followed by an accusative, signifies simply *to serve*, or *be in subjection*, when it takes the preposition לְ it is causative in signification, *to cause to serve*, *reduce to servitude*. The prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of the Chaldean empire by Cyrus and his royal allies, at the termination of the seventy years during which the Jews were in exile in Babylon. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20—23. It requires all the hardihood of modern infidelity to regard this verse as a vaticinium ex eventu; yet Movers and Hitzig scruple not to affirm that it is so. For other instances of לְעַבְדָּם before the subject of a proposition, see 2 Kings vi. 5; xviii. 30; Jer. xxxvi. 23.

9. לְחִלְמוֹתֵיכֶם, *your dreams*, requires, to make it agree with the other nouns here used, to be read לְחִלְמוֹתֵיכֶם, *your dreamers*. Thus one of Kennicott's MSS., the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. The Targ. combines both לְחִלְמוֹתֵיכֶם, *the dreamers of*



- 10 king of Babylon. For they prophesy falsehood to you, in order to remove you far from your land, and that I should
- 11 drive you out and ye should perish. But the nation that shall bring its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, I will suffer to remain in its own land, saith Jehovah, and it shall cultivate it, and dwell in it.
- 12 And I spake to Zedekiah, king of Judah, according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks into the yoke of the king of
- 13 Babylon, and serve him, and his people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence, as Jehovah hath spoken against the
- 14 nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Listen not, therefore, to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they
- 15 prophesy falsehood to you. For I have not sent them, saith Jehovah, but they prophesy falsely in my name, in order that I may drive you out, and ye may perish, and your prophets who prophesy to you.
- 16 I spake also to the priests, and to all this people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Listen not to the words of your prophets, who
- 17 prophesy to you, saying, Behold! the vessels of the house of Jehovah shall now speedily be brought back from Babylon; for they prophesy falsehood to you. Listen not to them; serve the king of Babylon, and live; why should this city be
- 18 made desolate? But if they are prophets, and if the word of Jehovah is with them, let them intercede with Jehovah of Hosts, that the vessels which remain in the house of Jehovah, and in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem,
- 19 may not go to Babylon. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the stands, and concerning the rest of the vessels which
- 20 remain in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, did not take away when he carried Jechoniah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, captive from Jerusalem to

*your dreams.* All the different kinds of prognostication here denounced, obtained among the heathen.

12—18. A special application of the subject to Zedekiah.

18. לְהַחְיֵהוּ stands for לְהַחְיֵהוּ, which

is the reading of some MSS., or לְהַחְיֵהוּ. See on chap. xxiii. 14.

19—22. For the brazen or copper articles here specified, see 1 Kings vii. 15—28. Nebuchadnezzar only removed the more costly vessels in the reigns of

- 21 Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. Surely thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels which remain in the house of Jehovah, and in the  
 22 house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: They shall be brought to Babylon, and there shall they be till the day when I shall look after them, saith Jehovah; then I will bring them up, and restore them to this place.

Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, 10. The remainder were taken at the destruction of Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah, 2 Kings xxv. 13—17. For the restoration of the vessels by order of Cyrus, see Ezra i. 7—11.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

On the contradiction of Jeremiah by the pretended prophet Hananiah, 1—4, the messenger of Jehovah appealed to the event for the truth or falsehood of their respective predictions, 5—9. Hananiah then, to confirm his statement by a symbolical action, took and broke the yoke which was on the neck of Jeremiah: at the same time repeating his prediction, 10, 11. Our prophet having retired, received a message from the Lord, to repeat in stronger terms what he had previously delivered respecting the subjugation of the nations by Nebuchadnezzar, 12—14; and to announce to Hananiah his speedy death for having uttered a false prophecy to the people, 15—17.

- 1 AND it came to pass in the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azzur the prophet, who was of Gibeon, spake to me in the house of Jehovah in

1. The close connexion of this chapter with that which precedes it, is obvious from the identity of their subject-matter, as well as from the initial words, *in the same year*. How to reconcile the statements, that what follows took place in the *beginning* of the reign of Zedekiah, and yet that it happened in the *fourth year*, has greatly puzzled interpreters. Schmidius, Maurer, and others, think that the Jews were accustomed to divide any period of time into two halves, the former of which they called *רֵאשִׁית*, the *beginning*, and the latter *אַחֲרֵית*, the *end*. Now, as Zedekiah reigned eleven years, the fourth year would belong to the

former of the two. Michaelis is of opinion, that up to the fourth year, Zedekiah had only the occupancy of the throne by the yearly nomination of Nebuchadnezzar, but that then he was fully invested with the royal title and authority. This opinion has also been adopted by Scholz.—*Gibeon* was one of the cities of the priests, whence it may be inferred, that Hananiah belonged to that order. That he is styled *נָבִיא*, ver. 1, does not militate against this conclusion, since he simply appears to be so called with reference to the part which he acted in delivering false predictions in the name of the Lord.

- 2 the sight of the priests and of all the people, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have  
 3 broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years' time I will restore to this place all the vessels of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took away from this place, and conveyed them to Babylon.  
 4 Jeconiah also, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the captivity of Judah that went to Babylon, will I restore to this place, saith Jehovah; for I will break the yoke of the  
 5 king of Babylon. Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, in the sight of the priests, and in the sight of all the people who stood in the house of Jehovah,  
 6 even the prophet Jeremiah said, 'Amen! So may Jehovah do! May Jehovah confirm thy words which thou hast prophesied, by restoring the vessels of the house of Jehovah, and all the captivity from Babylon to this place! Only  
 7 hear, I beseech thee, this word that I speak in thy hearing, and in the hearing of all the people: The prophets who  
 8 were before me, and before thee of old, also prophesied concerning many countries, and concerning great kingdoms, of  
 9 war, and of calamity, and of pestilence. The prophet who prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet cometh to pass, the prophet shall be known, because Jehovah of Hosts hath really sent him.
- 10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from the neck of  
 11 Jeremiah the prophet, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in the sight of all the people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah:

4. There is, as Maurer observes, no reason to conclude, with Michaelis and Rosenmüller, that Hananiah was inimical to Zedekiah, and that he was attached to Jeconiah. All that his prediction implies is, that the restoration from Babylon would be complete.

5. The abbreviated form of the prophet's name, *יְרֵמְיָהּ*, instead of *יְרֵמְיָהוּ*, occurs throughout this chapter, except in the first instance, ver. 12. From the fact, that the title *נָבִיא*, the prophet, is here, and throughout the chapter added to the name of Jeremiah, Mover infers that it is of later insertion; but Hitzig finds the propriety of its use in the cir-

cumstance of its being given to Hananiah in the same connexion.

6—9. Jeremiah was willing to leave the contradictory predictions to be tested by the event, according to the enactment of the Mosaic law, Deut. xviii. 22. Instead of *נֶזֶק*, calamity, verse 8, a number of MSS. read *רָעָב*, famine, as xiv. 12; xxi. 9; xxvii. 8, 13; xxix. 17, 18; but all the ancient versions support the former, which is the more difficult reading, whereas the latter has most probably originated in emendation from the parallel passages.

11. To the contradictory statement made by Hananiah, our prophet did

In this manner will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, within two years' time, from off the neck of all the nations. Then Jeremiah the prophet went his way.

- 12 But the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah, after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke off from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Go and speak to Hananiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: Thou hast broken yokes of wood, but thou shalt make instead of them yokes of iron. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may be in servitude to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and they shall serve him, and I have also given to him the beasts of the field. Jeremiah the prophet further said to Hananiah the prophet, Hear, I beseech thee, O Hananiah! Jehovah hath not sent thee; but thou causest this people to trust in falsehood. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, Behold! I will dismiss thee from the face of the earth; this year thou shalt die, because thou hast spoken that which is rebellious against Jehovah. And Hananiah the prophet died the same year, in the seventh month.

not deign a reply; but, as we learn from the following verses, he was specially commanded to declare the determination of the Divine will on the subject.

13. The Jews and their confederates being stimulated to rebellion by the false prophets, should find the future servitude of the king of Babylon much more severe than what they had hitherto experienced. To intimate this, yokes of iron were to be substituted for those of wood. What Jeremiah had worn is here called *yokes*, in the plural, with reference to

the several parts of which it was composed.

16, 17. Hananiah had predicted, that within *two years'* time the Chaldean power should cease; but Jeremiah predicts, that, as a punishment for his presumption in uttering falsehood in the name of Jehovah, he himself should be cut off in the course of the present year, which accordingly came to pass. This event, which took place within the space of two months, was calculated to strengthen the authority of Jeremiah as a true prophet.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

To counteract the influence of the false prophets among the captives in Babylon, who flattered them with the hope of a speedy restoration to their native land, Jeremiah was inspired to address to them the letter contained in this chapter, 1—4, wherein they are exhorted to settle down quietly in Babylon, 5—7, and not to listen to those who would deceive them, 8, 9; but, at the same time, they are encouraged by the assurance, that, at the expiration of the predicted seventy

years, when they should have been cured of their idolatrous propensities, God would recover them, 10—14. Then follows a prediction of the severe calamities which should befall Zedekiah and the refractory Jews, who were still in their native land, 15—19. The letter concludes with a special threatening against two of the principal false prophets in Babylon, 20—23. The remaining verses of the chapter, 24—32, relate to another deceiver among the captives, who had written to prejudice the inhabitants of Jerusalem against Jeremiah.

- 1 THESE are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remnant of the elders of the captivity, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from
- 2 Jerusalem to Babylon ; after that Jechoniah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the locksmiths, had gone
- 3 from Jerusalem ; by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkijah, whom Zedekiah, king of Judah, sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,
- 4 saying : Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, to all the captivity which I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon :
- 5 Build ye houses, and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat
- 6 their fruit. Take wives, and beget sons and daughters, and take for your sons wives, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters ; and increase
- 7 there, and be not diminished. And seek ye the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray on its behalf to Jehovah, that in its peace ye may have peace.
- 8 For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel : Let not the prophets seduce you, who are in the midst of you ; nor your diviners ; neither listen to your dreams, which ye cause to

1—4. What was the object of this embassy from Zedekiah to the king of Babylon, is unknown. It appears to have taken place soon after he had succeeded Jechoniah. From mention being made of רְשָׁאִים, *the remnant* of the elders, we may infer, that some of that order had either died a natural death, or had been put to death in Babylon, on account of some insubordination among the captives. There

is no authority from Hebrew usage for rendering the term by *notables*, as Dahler has done. The *queen* was the mother of Jechoniah, 2 Kings xxiv. 15.

7. Comp. Rom. xiii. 1 ; 1 Tim. ii. 2.

8. As חֲלֻמֵּי is nowhere else used in Hiphil in the sense of dreaming, it is thought by some that the Mem prefixed in חֲלֻמֵּי, so as to form the participle of that conjugation, is merely borrowed

- 9 be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely to you in my name ;  
 10 I have not sent them, saith Jehovah. For thus saith  
 Jehovah : When seventy years shall have been accomplished  
 at Babylon, I will visit you, and confirm my good word to  
 11 you, by bringing you back to this place. For I know the  
 thoughts which I entertain toward you, saith Jehovah,  
 thoughts of peace and not of calamity, to give to you a  
 12 hopeful futurity. And ye shall call upon me, and go and  
 13 pray to me ; and I will hear you. And ye shall seek me, and  
 14 shall find me, when ye apply to me with all your heart. And  
 I will be found by you, saith Jehovah, and will reverse your  
 captivity, and collect you from all the nations, and from all  
 the places whither I have driven you, saith Jehovah : And I  
 will bring you back to the place whence I caused you to be  
 carried away captive.
- 15 Whereas ye say, Jehovah hath raised up prophets for us in  
 Babylon ;
- 16 Surely thus saith Jehovah concerning the king that sitteth on  
 the throne of David, and concerning all the people who dwell  
 in this city, your brethren who have not gone with you into  
 17 captivity. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts : Behold ! I will  
 send among them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence ;  
 and I will make them like nauseous figs, which cannot be  
 18 eaten for badness. And I will persecute them with the

from the preceding *נָאֵם*, and that the word is to be pointed *נִאֵם*, the participle in Kal. The present form, which stands for *נִאֵם*, would indicate that the captives solicited the false prophets to tell them encouraging dreams.

10. For the seventy years, see on chap. xiv. 11, 12.

11. *אֶחָד וְאֶחָד*, literally *an end and a hope*, meaning thereby a hopeful termination in the future of the present calamity, and a happy restoration to Judea.

12. *וְהָיָה*, *And ye shall go*, is not, with Michaelis, to be resolved into an idiom, expressive of perseverance or constancy, but refers to proceeding to the temple, or the synagogues, as places of prayer.

15. Many interpreters, not being able to trace any proper connexion here, consider that this verse has been transposed

from vers. 20 and 21, between which they would restore it, as its proper place. But if we regard vers. 16—19 as designed specifically to contradict the false hopes held out to the captives, that the Jewish state should stand, and that they should be restored to their brethren in Judea, there is, in reality, no want of connexion. The language of the false prophets is *supposed*, not *expressed*. I therefore concur with Maurer : Versum 15, non debebant sollicitare interpretes.

17. *נִפְחָם*, *horrible*, extremely loathsome, from *נָפַח*, the same as *נָפַח*, *to shudder*, be greatly shocked at anything. Applied here to the figs, as symbolical of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the term describes the utter depravity of their character. Comp. chap. xxiv. 8. *נִפְחָם* stands for *נִפְחָם*, the participle of Pual.

- sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and I will give them up to agitation in all the kingdoms of the earth, for an execration, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them !
- 19 Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith Jehovah, when I sent to them my servants the prophets, rising early, and sending them, but ye would not hear, saith Jehovah.
- 20 But hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of the captivity which I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.
- 21 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, respecting Ahab, the son of Kolaiah, and respecting Zedekiah, the son of Maasciah, who prophesy falsehood to you in my name : Behold ! I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and he shall slay them in your sight.
- 22 And there shall be taken from them a form of execration by all the captivity of Judah who are in Babylon, saying, Jehovah make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the
- 23 king of Babylon roasted in the fire. Because they did what was nefarious in Israel, and committed adultery with the wives of their neighbours, and spoke words in my name falsely, which I commanded them not : I know and am witness, saith Jehovah.
- 24 And to Shemaiah the Nehalemite thou shalt speak, saying :
- 25 Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name to all the people who are in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah
- 26 the priest, and to all the priests, saying : Jehovah hath made

22. That burning alive was a mode of punishment customary among the Chaldeans, see Dan. iii. 19. In the present instance, the culprits have by some been supposed to have been tortured by being roasted before a slow fire ; but this is doubtful.

23. The irregular *היה* is, with the Keri, to be pointed *היה*, or, there is a coalescence of the two words *היה*—the *ה* being dropped. That the *ה* cannot be the article, is evident from its omission before *פ*. For *הפך*, a nefarious deed, see on Is. xxxii. 6.

24. This verse, and those which follow

to the end of the chapter, furnish the contents of a second communication which Jeremiah sent to Babylon, after the messengers had brought a letter from the false prophet Shemaiah, condemnatory of the prophet of Jehovah, and reproving the authorities for their supineness in not apprehending him. Who this Shemaiah was, and why he is called the Nehalemite, is unknown.

25. *הפך*, the suffix with *ה* paragogic, for *הפך*.

26. *הפך*, LXX. *μαυρομένω*, the Pual Participle of *הפך*, Arab. *سَجَّ*, *strenuus*,

- thee priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, that there should be overseers in the house of Jehovah, in reference to every one who is a frantic, or pretendeth to be a prophet, and that
- 27 thou shouldest put him in the stocks and the dungeon. And now why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah the Anathothite,
- 28 who pretendeth to be a prophet to you? For to this effect he hath sent to us to Babylon, saying, It will be of long continuance: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant
- 29 gardens, and eat their fruit. And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet.
- 30 Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah,
- 31 saying: Send to all the captivity, saying, Thus saith Jehovah to Shemaiah the Nehelemite, because Shemaiah hath prophesied to you when I had not sent him, and hath caused
- 32 you to trust in falsehood; therefore, thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelemite and his seed; there shall not be to him one dwelling in the midst of this people, neither shall he behold the good which I will do to my people, saith Jehovah; for he hath spoken that which is rebellious against Jehovah.

*fortitudine vicit*, to exert oneself powerfully; spoken of false prophets, who wrought themselves up to a high pitch of fury when delivering their oracles, and of true prophets by way of contempt, 2 Kings ix. 11. For מַגְרָר, *stocks*, see chap. xx. 2. מַגְרָר is a *ἀπαξ λεγ.*, and has no root in Hebrew. It is found, however, in the Samaritan מַגְרָר, *coarctavit*, to confine in a narrow place; hence there

may naturally be associated with the noun the idea of a narrow dungeon. LXX. καταράκτην. Michaelis thinks it denotes a sewer, in which the water and filth were conveyed down from the temple.

30—32. Jeremiah was commissioned to write another letter to the captives, to put them on their guard against Shemaiah.

## CHAPTER XXX.

The prophet is commanded to commit to writing what follows in this and the following chapter, 1—4. The document commences with a doleful representation of the consternation occasioned by the capture of Babylon, 5—7; then succeeds a prediction of the deliverance of the exiles as the result, and a promise of the Messiah, 8, 9; on which is founded an encouragement to exercise confidence in Jehovah for the accomplishment of these prophecies, 10, 11. However great the sufferings of the captives on account of their sins, 12—15, yet their enemies should be put down, 16; while they in consequence should be restored to their



own land, 17—20, and the Messiah raised up, in union with whom they should experience the blessings of the Divine favour, 21, 22. The chapter concludes with a superadded prediction of the destruction of Babylon, 23, 24.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words which I have spoken to thee in a book. For behold! the days are coming, saith Jehovah, when I will reverse the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith Jehovah; and I will cause them to return to the land which I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. Now these are the words which Jehovah hath spoken concerning Israel, and concerning Judah.
- 5 Surely thus saith Jehovah :  
We have heard the sound of a panic,  
There is fear, and no peace.
- 6 Ask ye now, and see,  
Whether a male is in childbirth?  
Why do I see every man  
With his hands on his loins, like a woman in childbirth,  
And all faces are turned into paleness?
- 7 Alas! for that day is great,  
There is not like it;  
It is a time of trouble to Jacob,  
Yet he shall be delivered from it.

1—4. It is clear from the last of these verses, that what the prophet was to commit to writing was not any preceding portion of what we now have in his book, but the following discourse relative to the restoration of the exiles, and what was to ensue upon their re-establishment in Canaan. That chapters xxx. and xxxi. form one prophetic discourse, is allowed by most commentators. There is an identity of subject running through both; only the former is devoted to the return of the Jews from Babylon, the latter to that of the ten tribes of the Assyrian captivity, and to the blessings in reserve for the restored nation as made up of the whole. The terms *Israel* and *Judah*, ver. 3, are used distinctively of the descendants of those who constituted

the two separate kingdoms after the revolt.

5—7. These verses have generally been considered as descriptive of the miserable condition of the Jews during the period of the exile; but they seem rather to depict the state of terror into which they were thrown on the approach of the Medo-Persian army to the attack on Babylon. The destruction of the latter power was necessary to their deliverance, but they had every reason, in common with the Babylonians, to anticipate in the first instance fearful results from the invasion. What corroborates this view is the circumstance that *יָד*, *day*, is never used of any long period of calamity, but always refers to some crisis by which the fate of a nation is decided.

- 8 For it shall come to pass on that day,  
 Saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
 I will break off his yoke from thy neck,  
 And I will burst asunder thy bands;  
 And strangers shall no longer hold him in servitude.
- 9 But they shall serve Jehovah their God,  
 And David their king, whom I will raise up for them.
- 10 Fear not thou, therefore, O my servant Jacob!  
 Saith Jehovah,  
 Neither be thou dismayed, O Israel!  
 For behold! I will deliver thee from afar,  
 And thy seed from the land of their captivity;  
 And Jacob shall return, and be tranquil and quiet,  
 And none shall make him afraid.
- 11 For I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to save thee;  
 Though I make an end of all the nations  
 Whither I have driven thee,

Comp. Is. ix. 4; x. 3; xiv. 3; xxx. 25; Joel ii. 11; Zeph. i. 14, 15. Terrible as were to be the circumstances connected with the fall of Babylon, and great as might be the anxiety of the Jews on the occasion, it was to issue in their deliverance. The application of this prophecy by Michaelis to the times of the Maccabees, is anything but satisfactory.

8. The reference in the suffix of *his yoke*, cannot be to Jacob, since he, i.e. the nation descended from him, is immediately addressed in the second person; but to the king of Babylon, understood. The foreigners to whom the Jews were no longer to be in subjection, were the Chaldeans, whose yoke had just been mentioned.

9. By David here we are to understand a king of royal Davidic blood; but no monarch of that family occupied the Jewish throne subsequent to the Babylonish captivity. Though Zerubbabel, to whom Grotius applies the term, was of the family of David, yet he never laid claim to the title of king; so that the individual spoken of can be no other than the Messiah. Thus the Targ. *בן דוד המלך*, the Messiah the son of David their king, and so almost all the moderns.

Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Hos. iii. 5. The idea favoured by Kimchi, that the ancient David will again appear, has had few approvers. Though the prophecy that the Jews should serve the Messiah, has hitherto had only a very partial fulfilment, yet the time is coming when they shall all adore him as their Saviour and King. Hos. iii. 5; Rom. xi. 25—32. It was their privilege to have served him, and if the body of the nation had received him as preached by the Apostles, which myriads of them did, Acts xxi. 20, their present dispersion would never have taken place. They would have continued to live in their own land, composing Christian Churches at Jerusalem, and throughout Judea, and enjoying the eminent privileges of a Christianized civil government.

10. The proclamation of Cyrus, granting liberty to the Jews to return to Palestine, was made "throughout all his kingdom," Ezra i. 1, so that those who were in the most remote parts could avail themselves of it.

11. *עַל־פְּנֵי*. It was right and proper that the Jews should be punished for their idolatries, but their punishment having effected its object, they were

I will not make an end of thee,  
But I will chastise thee as is meet,  
For I cannot leave thee altogether unpunished.

12 For thus saith Jehovah :

Thy bruise is desperate,  
And thy wound is grievous.

13 No one undertaketh thy case, to heal thee ;  
As for medicines, none are applied to thee.

14 All thy lovers have forgotten thee,  
They seek not after thee ;  
Surely I have smitten thee with the wound of an enemy,  
With severe chastisement,  
Because of the greatness of thine iniquity,  
Because thy sins were increased ;

15 Why criest thou on account of thy bruise ?  
Thy pain is desperate :  
Because of the greatness of thine iniquity,  
And because thy sins were increased,  
Have I done these things to thee.

16 Nevertheless, all who devour thee shall be devoured,  
And all thine adversaries shall go every one of them into  
captivity ;  
And those who spoil thee shall become a spoil,  
And all who plunder thee I will deliver up to plunder.

17 For I will restore health to thee,  
And heal thee of thy wounds,  
Saith Jehovah :

nationally to be restored, while the Babylonians, &c. were to become entirely extinct. Some render *אֶתְּךָ לֹא אֶמָּחֶה*, *I will not utterly destroy thee*, but the verb never has this signification in Piel.

12—15. So desperate were the circumstances of the Jews in Babylon, while enduring the punishment God had inflicted upon them for their crimes, that no human interposition which they could rationally expect, could avail for their deliverance. Egypt, Syria, Tyre, &c., which had formerly been their confederates, were all laid prostrate by the same haughty conqueror whose chains they themselves wore. They are ac-

cordingly represented under the metaphor of a body full of wounds, left entirely destitute of medical aid. The words *אֶתְּךָ לֹא אֶמָּחֶה* are partly borrowed from a court of justice, and partly from medical practice. *אֶמָּחֶה* I take to be a nominative absolute, *as for medicines*. For *אֶמָּחֶה* see on chap. viii. 22.

16, 17. When all help from man failed, Jehovah from a quarter altogether unexpected raised up a deliverer in Cyrus, by whom the Babylonian empire was totally subverted, and the outcast Jews restored to their own land. *אֶתְּךָ*, ex more Aramæorum for *אֶתְּךָ*, the middle radical being compensated for by *נ*. See

Because they called thee an outcast,  
It is Zion whom no one seeketh after.

18 Thus saith Jehovah,

Behold ! I will reverse the captivity of Jacob's tents,  
And take compassion on his habitations ;  
And the city shall be built on its own hill,  
And the palace shall be inhabited on its proper place.

19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving,

And the sound of those who rejoice :  
And I will increase them, and they shall not be diminished,  
And I will cause them to be honoured,  
And they shall not be despised.

20 Their children also shall be as formerly,

And their congregation shall be established before me ;  
And I will punish all their oppressors.

21 And their Glorious One shall be of themselves,

And their Ruler shall proceed from the midst of them,  
And I will cause Him to draw near, and He shall approach  
to me :

But who is He that hath pledged his heart to approach to me ?  
Saith Jehovah.

the Note of C. B. Michaelis in Rosenmüller. Six MSS. and two printed editions read *הַמִּצֵּד*.

18. *הַי*, from *הָלַל*, *to be high, to elevate*, specially used of *mounds* or *heaps of ruins*, is here employed to denote the remains of the temple on Moriah. *הַמִּצֵּד* may either signify the temple, or the royal palace on Mount Ziou. The latter seems preferable on account of its being spoken of as to be inhabited, which does not so well apply to the temple. See 1 Kings xvi. 18 ; 2 Kings xv. 25.

21, 22. The affix *י* in the former of these verses and that which precedes it, is to be taken collectively, and rendered in the plural. That *הַמִּצֵּד* and *הַמִּצֵּד*, however, are to be restricted to an individual, the accompanying circumstances show. Who this illustrious governor is, has been disputed. Michaelis and Scholz think it may have been John Hyrcanus ; Grotius and others, Zerubbabel. But with neither of these will the predicates

properly agree. That the person spoken of was to be a priest, is generally allowed ; but though Hyrcanus was hereditarily high priest and ruler, yet there was nothing so peculiar about him or his offices, as to call for the declaration that he should approach unto Jehovah ; for this all his predecessors had done in the way that he did : or to warrant the pointed and emphatic interrogatory : " But *הַמִּצֵּד הַזֶּה*, *who is he* that hath pledged his heart to approach to me ? " The question is put as something altogether unique. Such an approach had never been made before. Both *הַמִּצֵּד* and *הַמִּצֵּד* are specially used of the sacerdotal approach to Jehovah, Exod. xix. 22 ; Lev. xxi. 17, 23 ; and the combination of the priestly and regal characters in the same person, is quite in keeping with the representation given of the offices of the Messiah, Ps. cx. and Zech. vi. 13. The phrase *הַמִּצֵּד לִי* is peculiar to this place. *הַמִּצֵּד* properly signifies *to mix, to mix one-*

- 22 And ye shall be my people,  
And I will be your God.
- 23 Behold the storm of Jehovah goeth forth furiously,  
A sweeping storm, it shall be hurled on the head of the wicked.
- 24 The fierce anger of Jehovah shall not turn back,  
Till he hath executed it,  
Till he hath effected the purposes of his heart :  
In future days ye shall consider it.

*self up*, or identify oneself with the affairs of another, to pledge oneself for his life, to become surety for him. 23, *heart*, as the centre of the circulation of the blood in which the life consists, may here be equivalent to *life*, or *self*, or it may denote *courage*, or *fortitude of mind*; so that, to pledge one's heart, is to venture by an exposure of one's life in the performance of any act. See Ewald and Umbreit. The language conveys the idea of the magnitude of the undertaking, and the inadequacy of all merely human beings to engage in it. We have here, as Dr. J. P. Smith aptly expresses himself in his valuable work on *The Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ*, (p.100, London, 1847, 12mo.,) "a true and efficient Mediator depicted as possessing a

previous and independent right, as one in union of nature with those whom he is seeking to bless, as pledging himself to the fulfilment of his work, as approaching the awful presence of Deity, the Holy Judge of men, on their behalf," &c.

22. This verse, which is omitted in the LXX., and which Hitzig considers to be spurious, on the ground of its coming in so tamely after the powerful appeal, ver. 21, properly connects with verse 20, the intervening verse being introduced parenthetically.

23, 24. Comp. chap. xxiii. 19, 20, where the language is identical, except that for *מִיִּיְהוָה* we have here *מִיִּיְהוָה*, and *בְּיָמָיו* after *וְהָיָה* is omitted.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

The restoration should not embrace the Jews only; the ten tribes were likewise to be included, 1—6. Jehovah, calling upon them to exult at the prospect of the event, promises to conduct them in safety to their own land, 7—9. The heathen are summoned to contemplate the prosperous and happy condition of restored Israel, 10—14, contrasted with the desolate circumstances of the land during the captivity, 15, which were now to be reversed, 16, 17. The ten tribes are next introduced as grieving on account of their apostasy from Jehovah, for which they had been punished, 18, 19; and the scene changes by the introduction of a gracious declaration of their tender reception on the part of Jehovah, 20, and a call to the penitents to return and take possession of their ancient cities, 21. They are then urged to betake themselves resolutely to the journey, by the assurance that Jehovah would effectually interpose on their behalf, and render them superior to their enemies, 22. The following verses, 23—30, contain more specific promises of the temporal prosperity of the restored Israelites. The Messianic dispensation is then announced, together with the joint participation

of the whole people in its blessings, 31—34, for which they were infallibly to be preserved, 35—37. The document concludes with a prediction of the restoration and enlargement of the city of Jerusalem, 38—40.

- 1 AT that time, saith Jehovah,  
I will be a God to all the families of Israel,  
And they shall be my people.
- 2 Thus saith Jehovah :  
Israel found favour in the desert,  
A people left of the sword,  
When I went to give it rest.
- 3 Of old Jehovah appeared to me—  
Yes ; I loved thee with everlasting love,  
Therefore have I prolonged loving-kindness to thee.

1. בָּצֵא הָיָא, *at that time*, refers to the period when the Jews were to be restored from the Babylonish captivity, which had been specially predicted in the preceding chapter. At the same time the ten tribes were likewise to be restored. The restoration was to comprehend the whole nation, and not the exiles from the southern kingdom only. Instead of worshipping different idols as they had done, they should unitedly worship the God of their fathers, and enjoy the blessings which obedience to his will secures. Michaelis altogether mistakes the scope of the chapter, when he explains the promises contained in it of events which were to take place in the history of the Jews subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

2, 3. It has been questioned whether the experience of the Divine favour here recognised belongs to the deliverance from Egypt, or to that from Babylon. Theodoret decidedly takes the latter view, ἔρημον καλεῖ τὴν Βαβυλῶνα. That קָצַץ may be taken as a prophetic future is undeniable, as likewise, that the Babylonish captivity may fitly be spoken of figuratively as a wilderness-state ; but the interpretation which applies the language to the former manifestation of the lovingkindness of Jehovah commends itself as the more natural and appropriate. Thus the Targ. קָדַם אֲנִי לְיְיָ וְיְיָ אֱהֵבָה לִּי לְעֶד, *Thus saith the Lord, who*

*shewed mercy to the people who went forth from Egypt.* Upon that manifestation is founded an argument in favour of a renewed experience of it by the exiled Israelites. The language has its parallel in Hos. xiii. 5. When exposed to manifold evils in the great Arabian desert, Jehovah miraculously appeared on their behalf, and brought them to Canaan. They were delivered not only from the sword of Pharaoh, who went forth with his army to prevent their escape, but from that of the Amalekites and other neighbouring nations that attempted to prevent their entrance into the promised land. שָׁרַף, placed for the sake of emphasis at the end of the verse, is properly the nominative to קָצַץ, though קָצַץ would otherwise be such from position. הָיָה, the infinitive absolute, has by some been referred to יִשְׁכָּח, but its nominative is הָיָה, and the finite form of the verb, suggested by the attendant circumstances, is that of the preterite tense. In the third verse Israel is represented as gratefully responding to the sentiment expressed in the second ; on which Jehovah declares, that the ancient love which he had borne to that people should still be extended to them. מִלְּקֶדֶם expresses here distance of time, not of place. קָדַם is followed by an accusative both of person and thing, and signifies *to lengthen, prolong, continue*. Comp. Ps. xxxvi. 11 ; cix. 12. The preterite is used as the prophetic future.

- 4 I will build thee again,  
And thou shalt be built,  
O virgin of Israel !  
Thou shalt again deck thyself with thy tabrets,  
And shalt go out in the dance of those that make merry.
- 5 Thou shalt again plant vineyards in the mountains of Samaria ;  
The planters shall plant and enjoy the fruit.
- 6 For there shall be a day when the watchmen in Mount Ephraim  
shall cry:  
Arise, and let us go up to Zion,  
To Jehovah our God.
- 7 For thus saith Jehovah ;  
Shout aloud with joy to Jacob,  
And give a shrill cry among the chief of the nations ;  
Publish ye, praise ye, and say :  
Deliver, O Jehovah ! thy people, the remnant of Israel.

4. The combination of the active and passive in *אֶתְּבַנֶּה וְתִבְנִי* is designed to express more strongly the certainty of the event. Israel is represented as a *virgin*, in order to convey the idea of that state of purity or entire separation from idols to which she was recovered during the captivity.

5. Samaria having been the metropolis of the ten tribes, "the mountains of Samaria" are equivalent to the mountains of Israel. The temporal prosperity to which those tribes were to be restored, is beautifully depicted in this and the preceding verse. *אֵל* signifies to *pierce, violate, profane, treat as common or unconsecrated*. There is a reference to the enactment of the law, Lev. xix. 25, that the fruit of the vineyards was not to be eaten till the fifth year after the vines had been planted. The produce of the fourth was to be consecrated to Jehovah as a first-fruit, in acknowledgment that they held of him as the sovereign proprietor. Comp. Deut. xx. 6; xxviii. 30. The general idea conveyed by the expression is, that the restored Israelites were to have the undisturbed enjoyment of the fruit of their vines, for the cultivation of which the mountainous nature of their country was peculiarly favourable.

6. Anticipating the arrival of the annual festivals, the prophet calls upon the watchmen to summon the people to commence their journey to Jerusalem, as they had been accustomed to do before the revolt, and the establishment of image-worship at Dan and Beersheba. Henceforward, the ten tribes should unite with the rest in celebrating the rites of the temple-worship. There should be a joint recognition of Jehovah, not merely as the only God, but specially as the God whose relationship to the Israelites the Jews had despised and rejected. Instead of summoning by the ringing of bells as with us, the Orientals employ watchmen for the purpose, who occupy their stations on the towers, and proclaim the seasons of worship. "Mount Ephraim" is put for the whole of the mountainous country belonging to that tribe, and not for any single isolated elevation. As this mountain-group bordered on Benjamin, there is a singular propriety in the prophet's adverting to the proclamation as being made there, since it rose between him and the locality, the re-occupation of which by the ten tribes he here anticipates.

7. *רִאשֵׁי הַגּוֹיִם*, the *first, or chief of the nations*. That this designation is to be interpreted of the Hebrews, is evident

- 8 Behold ! I will bring them from the north country,  
And collect them from the recesses of the earth :  
Among them shall be the blind, and the lame,  
The pregnant woman, and she that travaileth together ;  
A large assemblage shall return hither.
- 9 With weeping they shall come,  
And with supplications I will lead them :  
I will conduct them to streams of water,  
By a straight way, in which they shall not stumble ;  
For I am a father to Israel,  
And Ephraim is my first-born.
- 10 Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations !  
And publish afar in the maritime regions,  
And say : He that scattered Israel will collect him,  
And guard him as a shepherd doth his flock.
- 11 For Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob,  
He hath redeemed him out of the hand of him that was stronger  
than he.
- 12 And they shall come and shout aloud on the height of Zion,  
And flow to the goodness of Jehovah,  
For the corn and the new wine, and the oil,  
And the sons of the flock and of the herd ;  
And their soul shall be like a well-watered garden,  
Neither shall they languish any more.

from its standing in direct correspondence to Jacob in the preceding member of the parallelism. Comp. *וְיָשׁוּבֵם*, Amos vi. 1, and my note there. Ewald improperly : *ἔσονται καὶ ἔσονται*, supposing the heathen nations to pray for the restoration of Israel. That people are here regarded as not yet returned, and are called universally to engage in praise and supplication for deliverance. *וְיָשׁוּבֵם* is the Infinitive.

8, 9. These verses contain an accumulation of promises on the part of Jehovah, for the encouragement of the supplicating exiles. While they should cherish feelings of deep sorrow at the remembrance of the crimes which had been the cause of their dispersion, and abound in supplication for the exercise of forgiving mercy, Jehovah graciously

declares, that he would exercise all the tenderness towards them which a father does towards his first-born. They were to be restored from Assyria, Media, and the most remote regions ; and so universal was the restoration to be, that not even the most infirm were to be left behind. *וְיָשׁוּבֵם*, *hither*, at the close of ver. 8, indicates the position of the prophet as living in Palestine at the time he wrote. The hypothesis of Movers, that Zechariah (chap. viii. 7, 8,) quotes verses 7, 8, and 33, and speaks of their author as having lived at the time when the foundation of the temple was laid under Zerubbabel, is rejected by Hitzig as entirely unsupported by external evidence.

10—14. The intelligence of the interposition of Jehovah on behalf of his scattered people, is commanded to be



- 13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,  
And the youths and the aged together ;  
For I will turn their mourning into joy,  
And will comfort them,  
And make them rejoice after their sorrow.
- 14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fat,  
And my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 15 Thus saith Jehovah,  
A sound was heard in Ramah,  
Lamentation, and most bitter crying,  
Rachel weeping for her children,  
And refusing to be comforted,  
Because they were not.
- 16 Thus saith Jehovah,  
Restrain thy voice from weeping,  
And thine eyes from tears ;  
For there is a reward for thy work,  
Saith Jehovah,  
And they shall return from the land of the enemy.
- 17 There is also hope for thy futurity,  
Saith Jehovah,  
For thy children shall return to their border.

spread among the pagan nations, that they might be led to recognise his claims as the only God. Then follows a beautiful cluster of promises, depicting the great prosperity of the people after their return, and the hilarity which should prevail throughout the land. Comp. Zech. viii. 5. In vers. 12 and 14 is a recognition of the flocking of the Israelites to the temple-worship at Jerusalem, and the abundant supplies that would be afforded for the support of the priesthood, and for all the wants of the nation.

15—17. *Ramah*, the town here mentioned, was situated in the tribe of Benjamin, on the east of the great northern road, at the distance of two hours' journey from Jerusalem. By a beautiful figure, Rachel, the mother of the Ephraimites, who was buried at this place, is personified, and represented as risen from her grave, and

bitterly lamenting the absence of her descendants, who had all been carried into exile. As her death took place during Jacob's journey from Padanaram to Mamre, and express mention is made of Bethlehem, Gen. xxxv. 19, nothing was more natural than for the Evangelist Matthew (ii. 18) to quote the words of Jeremiah as applicable to the massacre of the children in Bethlehem and its vicinity, of which they furnished an apt description. The prediction and the quotation relate to totally different events, but the language in itself is equally descriptive of both. See Dr. W. L. Alexander's *Congregational Lecture*, p. 54, and my *Comment. on Hos. xi. 1.*—מְרִירָה is the plural of intensity—*bitternesses* for *most bitter*. The singular suffix in מְרִירָה is to be taken as a collective, and rendered in the plural. This usage is so frequent in Hebrew, that the cou-

15 I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself :

Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,

Take a steer untrained ;

Turn thou me, that I may turn,

For thou, O Jehovah ! art my God.

19 Surely, after I turned, I repented,

And after I was instructed, I smote on my thigh :

I was ashamed, yea I was even confounded,

Because I bore the reproach of my youth.

20 Is Ephraim a son dear to me ?

Is he a delightful child ?

Surely since I spoke against him,

I do earnestly remember him still :

Wherefore my bowels sound for him,

picture of Michaelis, that the text originally read *ye*, is altogether erroneous. The supposed antiquity of the LXX, Arab., Vulg., Syr., and Targ., goes for nothing in such a case, since the sense requires the plural in translations.—*עָנָה*, the *sway*, verse 16, for which there was to be a reward to Rachel, was what she did in weeping for her children. Her lamentations were not to be fruitless. Those for whom she so bitterly grieved should again appear in their own land. The most certain hope might be entertained respecting their future restoration, verse 17.

15—30. The ten tribes, personified in Ephraim, the founder of the leading portion of the northern kingdom, are now introduced, imputing, with feelings of the most poignant grief for past apostasy, the resting grace of their covenant God, and their determination henceforward to cleave to Him alone. It was only on condition of their conversion, that they were warranted to expect recovery from the exile. Under the metaphor of a steer untrained to labour, which required the severe use of the goad, the refractory character of the Israelites is confessed, and the severity of their punishment so acknowledged. The metaphor was probably borrowed from Deut. xxi. 15. Yonana, Michaelis, and others interpret the turning spoken of as denoting the return to

Palestine, but this construction is repugnant to the spirit of the passage, which requires us to understand it of conversion to Jehovah, from the sins which had occasioned their removal into the countries of the north. Deeply contrived of the innate propensity of the heart to continue in a state of estrangement from God, the Israelites earnestly pray for the exercise of divine influence, as that which alone could secure their genuine conversion. The result of this conversion is stated, verse 19, to be a penitential, judicious, and self-abasing feeling, as having acted so guiltily a part. The *smiting on the thigh* is a very natural mode of expressing indignation and grief, and was common among the Hebrews, Persians, Greeks, and other nations. Ezek. xii. 13 ; *Ibid.* xii. 162, *yr.* 113 ; *Konop. Oxytrop.* vii. 3 ; *Cicero Tescal. Quæst.* iii. The *goad* of Ephraim was the period immediately consequent upon the revuls of the ten tribes, during which image-worship and idolatry prevailed in the land.

20. Nothing can exceed the touching exhibition of tender parental feeling towards a returning prodigal, which is here presented by Jehovah. The questions put at the commencement of the verse would require to be answered in the negative, if respect were had to the past conduct of Ephraim. Having acted such

I will assuredly have mercy on him,  
Saith Jehovah.

- 21 Erect for thyself pillars,  
Set up for thyself poles,  
Set thy heart on the highway,  
The road by which thou wentest :  
Return, O virgin of Israel !  
Return to these thy cities.
- 22 How long wilt thou be undecided ;  
O backsliding daughter !  
For Jehovah createth a new thing in the land :  
Woman shall encompass man.

a rebellious part, it cannot be that Jehovah can have any regard for him. The treatment to which he had been subject during the exile, is naturally to be considered as a mark of the Divine displeasure. But viewed in connexion with his conversion, they are met with the strongest affirmative, and the most powerful assurances of affection on the part of God. *וְדַבַּר*, which Hitzig renders *to speak for*, in the sense of wooing or inducing to return to God as the husband of the covenant people, the connexion requires us to interpret in the hostile sense, as Num. xxi. 5, 7. The reference is to the threatenings which God had pronounced against them on account of their idolatries. Though he had thus spoken against them and punished them by carrying these threatenings into effect, yet he never forgot them, but, on the contrary, delighted in the anticipation of their ultimate recovery.

21. The captive Israelites are called to set out on their return—those going first, recollecting the way by which they had proceeded when led away by the Assyrians, and erecting monuments or landmarks for the guidance of those who should follow. *וְקָמְהָם*, for which the Keri has *וְקָמָהּ*, is according to the form of the feminine pronoun *וְהָאֵל*, a form which specially occurs in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Though exactly the same in form with the substantive rendered *bitter crying*, ver. 15, *וְקָמָהּ*, as here used in the sense of *pillars or columna*, which the parallel *וְקָמָהּ* requires, must be derived, not from

*קָמַר*, but from *קָמַר* to raise, set up, be or make erect, like *קָמַר* the palm-tree—so called from its erectness. Comp. on Chap. x 5. The idea here expressed is taken from the custom of the caravans by which pillars, poles, and pointed heaps of stones are set up in the desert, as waymarks to guide them on their return. I frequently met with such waymarks while traversing the deserts in the interior of Iceland. The cities formerly occupied by the ten tribes are graphically represented as waiting for their return.

22. *וְהָיָה* for *וְהָיָה*: the *ו* is paragogic. I agree with Professor Lee, that in this passage the verb has the signification of *acting undecidedly, or doubtfully*, as the Syriac has it. In Song v. 6, the only other place in which *וְהָיָה* occurs, it is evidently opposed to coming forward, or appearing according to expectation. The Israelites demurred about returning, no doubt from the fear that, however they might obtain liberty to set out, they might be overpowered by the way, or subdued by fresh enemies on their entrance into Palestine. The prophet expostulates with them on account of their indecision; and, to remove all apprehension from their minds, he assures them, that by the wonderful interposition of Jehovah they should successfully cope with all who might oppose them. Such I consider to be the meaning of the words, simple in themselves, but much contested as to sense: *וְקָמָהּ חֶסֶב בְּנִי, woman shall encompass man*. How they should ever have been applied to the miraculous con-

- 23 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
This saying shall yet be repeated  
In the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof,  
When I reverse their captivity :  
Jehovah bless thee, O abode of righteousness !  
O mountain of holiness !
- 24 And Judah shall dwell therein, and all its cities together,  
Husbandmen, and those who go out with the flock.
- 25 For I have satiated the weary soul,  
And filled every sorrowful soul.
- 26 On this I awoke, and beheld,  
And my sleep was sweet to me.
- 27 Behold ! the days come, saith Jehovah,

ception of our Saviour, it is difficult to imagine. Even supposing that  $\text{עַל}$  could be applied to gestation, which it nowhere else is, what would thus be expressed was a thing of such everyday occurrence, that it could with no propriety be said of it, that it was a new thing which Jehovah would create in the earth. Besides, the words  $\text{עַל}$  and  $\text{עַל}$ , as here contrasted, are simply distinctive of the two sexes,—the one conveying the idea of weakness, the other that of strength. Now as  $\text{עַל}$  is clearly used in the acceptation of *protecting, defending*, or the like, Deut. xxxii. 10; Ps. xxxii. 10, the same signification will be most appropriate here, where the prophet is encouraging the timid and helpless Israelites to set out from the lands of their exile. Thus Calvin: Quum igitur feminam viro comparat, non dubito quin significet Prophetam Israelitas, qui similes erant feminis, hoc est, carebant viribus, destituti erant omni auxilio: quia ergo dicat fore superiores hostibus suis quorum potentia poterat toti mundo terrorem incutere. Why should they hesitate, since Jehovah would make the feeblest of them more than a match for the most powerful of their foes? Gesenius not inaptly quotes the words of the Iliad, i. 37, or  $\text{Χρῆμα ἀνδρὸς ἰσχυροῦς}$ . Hengstenberg, Hitzig, with some of the earlier Christian interpreters, explain the woman, of the Jewish church, and the man, of Jehovah as her husband, to whom she now returned from

her apostasy; but such exegesis does not meet the philological exigencies of the text.

23—26. Jerusalem was again to be the metropolis of the whole Hebrew nation; and, entirely cleansed from the abominations of idolatry, was, conformably to its original destination, to be the seat of the sacred worship of Jehovah. Comp. Is. i. 26, 27; Zech. viii. In immediate connexion with the capital, the tribe of Judah should enjoy all its former temporal advantages, of which agricultural and pastoral prosperity are specified as the chief. The pronominal suffix in  $\text{עַל}$ , ver. 24, refers to  $\text{יְהוָה}$ , ver. 23, and the nominatives to  $\text{עַל}$  are  $\text{יְהוּדָה}$  and  $\text{עַלְמֵהָא}$  all his cities, taken for the inhabitants both of town and country.—C. B. and J. D. Michaelis, Döderlein, Rosenmüller, Scholz and Umbreit consider the words of ver. 26 to be those of Jehovah, who is frequently said in Scripture, anthropopathically, to sleep, when he does not actively interpose in behalf of his people. Jerome, on the other hand, thinks they are the language of the Hebrews: but neither interpretation can be recommended for its facility. The words appear rather to be those of Jeremiah himself, and indicate, that the preceding revelations had been communicated to him in a supernatural dream. Their delightful character had left a pleasant impression on his mind.

27—30. A prophecy of the great pro-

When I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah,  
With the seed of man, and the seed of beast.

- 28 And it shall be that as I have acted vigilantly with respect to  
them

To pluck up, and to break down.

And to pull down, and to destroy and to afflict :

So I will act vigilantly with respect to them,

To build and to plant,

Saith Jehovah.

- 29 In those days it shall no more be said,  
The fathers have eaten sour grapes ;  
And the teeth of the children are blunted.

- 30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity,  
Every man that eateth the sour grapes,  
His teeth shall be blunted.

- 31 Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah,  
When I will make a new covenant  
With the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

- 32 Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers,  
In the day I took hold of their hand,  
To bring them out from the land of Egypt ;  
Which my covenant they brake,  
And I rejected them,  
Saith Jehovah.

sperity of the Hebrew people as restored and reunited in Palestine, contrasted with the judgments with which they had been visited in the exile, when those who had been born during that period, and had not been guilty of the crimes for which their fathers were punished, nevertheless suffered the calamities as well as they. This gave occasion to the proverbial expressions employed here and Ezek. xviii. 2, the import of which we find in plain language Lam. v. 7.

31—34. That the covenants here described are the old or Jewish dispensation, and the gospel economy under the Messiah, must be conceded by all who admit the inspired authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the 8th chapter of that Epistle, vers. 8—12, the words of the prophet are quoted for

the express purpose of proving the abrogation of the old covenant and the introduction of the new. The only questions that arise relate to the persons with whom it is declared by Jeremiah the new covenant was to be made, and the time at which it was to be made with them. Now, it requires no elaborate inquiry to settle the former of these points. That the Jews as a people literally taken, are intended, and not the spiritual seed of Abraham, or true believers whether Jews or Gentiles, must be conclusively evident to every one who impartially examines the context. The subject of this and the preceding chapter is the restoration of the Hebrews, who are repeatedly, as elsewhere, designated *the house of Judah and the house of Israel*, chap. xxx. 3, 4; xxxi. 27, 31;

33 But this is the covenant which I will make  
With the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah,  
After those days, saith Jehovah :

I will put my law within them,  
And write it on their heart ;

And I will be their God,  
And they shall be my people.

34 And they shall no more teach

Every one his neighbour, and every one his brother, saying,

Know Jehovah :

For they shall all know me,

From the least even to the greatest,

Saith Jehovah ;

For I will pardon their iniquity,

And their sin I will remember no more.

*Jerah and Lamed*, xix. 7, 10, 15; xxix. 1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 23, 24, 36. It would be doing violence to one of the first principles of hermeneutical consistency to explain these terms, restricted as they are in the passages referred to, by various arguments applicable only to the Hebrews, or of the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom indifferently. Nor can any thing be more plausibly incongruous than to give to the language *the house of Judah and the house of Lamed*, ver. 31, a different interpretation from that which is given to the same language as occurring ver. 27, where it is universally admitted the *literal Israel* are meant.

The question respecting the time when the new covenant was to be made with the Jews, is one of more difficult determination, and necessarily involves another in regard to the nature of the covenant itself. If all that is meant by it is merely a dispensation of mercy and grace under which they were to be placed, the blessings of which were so-corded to them only by their compliance with certain conditions, it does not appear in what it essentially differs from the Old Covenant. Nor can it be denied that the Jews have broken the New Covenant, viewed simply as an outward dispensation, as completely as their fathers did the Old, and have in conse-

quence been rejected for an incomparably longer period. But the grand distinguishing features of the subsequent economy are its securing by an adequate atonement the actual forgiveness of sin, and by the interworking of effectual grace, the permanent obedience of those with whom it is made. Now, so far as the atonement is concerned, the New Covenant may be said to have been virtually made when Messiah as the Covenant-victim died upon the cross ; but, as it respects pardon of sin and spiritual regeneration, it then took effect in the experience of the Jewish people only to the extent of the remnant according to the election of grace. With the Jews as a people, in other words, with the great body of the nation, it still remains effectively to be made. It is in reference to this great event that the Apostle Paul expresses the present prophesy in an abridged form, Rom. xi. 27. Then *all*, i.e. the bulk of the people, shall be made partakers of the spiritual blessings which the covenant entails.—The language of ver. 34, in regard to instruction, is altogether parallel to what we find 1 John ii. 27, and was never intercalated to indicate that the ordinary means of instruction should be superseded. None should remain destitute of the saving knowledge of God—all having their minds en-

- 35 Thus saith Jehovah,  
 Who appointed the sun for light by day,  
 The laws of the moon and the stars for light by night :  
 Who calmeth the sea when its waves roar,  
 Jehovah of Hosts is his name.
- 36 If these laws should depart from my presence,  
 Saith Jehovah ;  
 Then also may the seed of Israel cease  
 From being a nation before me for ever.
- 37 Thus saith Jehovah,  
 If the heavens above can be measured,  
 And the foundations of the earth underneath searched out :  
 Then will I also cast off the whole seed of Israel,  
 On account of all that they have done,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 38 Behold ! the days come, saith Jehovah,  
 When the city shall be built for Jehovah,  
 From the tower of Hananeel to the corner-gate.
- 39 And there shall yet go forth the measuring line,

lightened by the influences of the Holy Spirit. The persons spoken of are the genuine converts.

For the grounds on which I have rendered עַל הַיָּמִינִים וְעַל הַיָּמִינִים, *And I rejected them*, which substantially agrees with the LXX. καὶ ἡμέλησα αὐτῶν, and the apostolic quotation of that version, Heb. viii. 9, see my Note on chap. iii. 14.

35—37. That וְ in ver. 36 is not to be understood strictly in the sense of *nation*, is evident from the historical fact, that the Jews lost their nationality when their polity was broken up by the Romans. The term is to be taken in the looser acceptance of *people*, and thus is applicable to them in their present denationalized and scattered circumstances. For the immutability of the purpose of Jehovah to preserve the people of the Jews in order to invest them with the privileges and blessings of the New Covenant, he appeals to his almighty power as evinced in the laws and constitution of the natural world. However long may be their dispersion, and however great the number of the blinded, yet they shall eventually be restored to the enjoyment

of New-Covenant blessings. Their continual preservation as a distinct people, though scattered among all nations, exposed to every kind of maltreatment, and even cut off by thousands and tens of thousands, is nothing less than a perpetual miracle. While the celebrated nations of antiquity—the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, Romans, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Goths, and others, have all become extinct, the posterity of Abraham still exist, unamalgamated among the nations.

38—40. Having presented the Hebrew people to view at the distant end of the perspective, the prophet here returns to exhibit the restored state of Jerusalem after the Babylonish captivity. Its population should be so much increased, that, in order to contain it, the space within the former boundaries would be found insufficient. עִיר, which is wanting in the Textus Receptus of ver. 38, is found in thirty-four MSS., and has originally been in fourteen more. It is exhibited in the printed editions—Sonc. Brix. Complut. Munster 1534, 1546 ; Sonc. Proph. Jerem. Thessal. 1569 ;

Right along over the hill Gareb :

And it shall wind round to Goath.

40 And all the valley of the dead bodies, and the ashes,

And all the fields to the brook Kidron,

To the corner of the horse-gate towards the sun-rise,

Shall be holy to Jehovah :

It shall not be plucked up,

Nor pulled down any more for ever.

and is translated in all the versions.—  
 according to rule reject the Article, but  
 here retains it because preceded by גַּרְעֵב.  
 Attempts have been made to justify the  
 textual reading גַּרְעֵב, but there can be  
 little doubt that it is a mere error of  
 transcription for גַּרְעֵב, *fields*, which is  
 found in several MSS. and early editions,  
 and in 2 Kings xxiii. 4.—For the Tower  
 of Hananeel, see Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39;  
 Zech. xiv. 10; for the corner-gate, 2  
 Kings xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxvi. 9. Gareb  
 and Goath occur nowhere else. As the  
 verb גַּרַע signifies to scratch or scrape,

and the Syr. ܕܝܪܝܐ is the name of the  
 leprosy, it has been supposed that גַּרְעֵב,  
*Gareb*, is the designation of the locality  
 to which lepers were removed, as they  
 were not allowed to remain in the city.  
 The Horse-gate is mentioned Neh. iii. 28.  
 Scholz thinks it was in the north wall of  
 the city, and derived its name from the  
 horses of the royal stud being taken  
 through it to the Kidron to be watered.  
 —עַד עַד, *for ever*, is here to be taken with  
 the same limitation as it is frequently  
 when applied to matters connected with  
 the old dispensation.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

After an historical introduction, 1—5, the prophet relates the circumstances connected with the purchase of a patrimonial property at Anathoth, which was designed to certify the return of the Jews from Babylon to enjoy their former possessions, 6—15. He thereupon inserts a prayer occasioned by the transaction, in which, after expatiating on the manifestations of Divine goodness to the Hebrew people, and contrasting therewith their ungrateful returns, he argues from the desperate condition of their circumstances, as attacked by the Chaldeans, the improbability of his ever coming to the enjoyment of his property, 16—25. In reply, Jehovah pledges his omnipotence to the fulfilment of the prophecy implied in the transaction, but gives the assurance that there could be no escape from the impending judgments, 26—35; yet graciously promises a restoration to their own land, and to the enjoyment of lasting spiritual blessings, 36—41, in connexion with that of temporal prosperity, 42—44.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah in the tenth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, the same
- 2 was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. For then the

1. The siege of Jerusalem began in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah; consequently, the transaction

here described took place while it was being carried on.

2. The prophet was not confined in



- army of the king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem; and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which was in the house of the king of Judah. For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Why dost thou prophesy, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Behold! I will deliver this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans; but shall certainly be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall see his eyes; And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and he shall be there till I look after him: though ye may fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.
- Then Jeremiah said, The word of Jehovah was communicated to me, saying: Behold! Hanameel, the son of Shallum thy uncle, shall come to thee, saying, Buy for thyself my field that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. And Hanameel, the son of my uncle, came to me, according to the word of Jehovah, in the court of the guard, and said to me, Buy, I pray thee, my field which is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin, for thine is the right of inheritance, and thine is the redemption, buy it for thyself: then I knew that it was the word of Jehovah. So

prison, but merely within the open space occupied by the guard, whence he was not allowed to depart, but where any persons who chose might come to him.

5. The words *וְיָבִיטָהּ*, *until I visit him*, are ambiguous. They cannot be taken in a bad sense, for with punishment Zedekiah was visited when he was removed from his capital to Babylon. Nor can they be taken in a good sense, so as to imply a restoration to his throne, for he died in Babylon. They must therefore refer to the honourable circumstances connected with his death and burial, chap. xxxiv. 5.

7. Anathoth being one of the sacerdotal cities, Josh. xxi. 18, the field here specified must have been part of the thousand cubits which were allotted to the Levites for inheritance, Numb. xxxv. 4, 5. Though they were not permitted to possess and cultivate the land

of Canaan like their brethren of the other tribes, Numb. xviii. 20, yet they might enjoy the produce of the fields in the immediate vicinity of their cities. The prohibition, Lev. xxv. 34, to alienate by sale any of the attached fields, applied merely to their passing out of the hands of the Levites into those of persons belonging to the other tribes; so that there is no contradiction between what is there laid down as law, and the transaction recorded in this chapter. Besides, all that is meant in the present case is the purchase of the crops, or of the use of the field till the year of Jubilee, when it reverted to the proper owner. The right of redeeming the field, or assuming the occupancy of it on the failure of the owner, devolved upon Jeremiah as the nearest relative of Hanameel. Comp. Ruth iv. 3—6.

9. Reckoning the shekel at two shil-

I bought the field from Hanameel, the son of my uncle, which was in Anathoth, and I weighed to him the money, 10 seventeen shekels of silver. And I wrote in a deed, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed the money in 11 scales. I then took the deed of purchase, that which was sealed, according to law and statute, and that which was 12 open. And I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hananiah, the son of my uncle, and in the sight of the witnesses who 13 had subscribed the deed of purchase in the sight of all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard. And 14 I charged Baruch in their sight, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase, both that which is sealed, and this open deed, and deposit them in an earthen vessel, that they may last 15 many days. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Houses, and fields, and vineyards, shall yet be purchased in this land.

16 And I prayed to Jehovah, after I had delivered the deed of 17 purchase to Baruch, the son of Neriah, saying: Ah! Lord Jehovah! Behold, thou hast made the heavens and the earth, by thy great power, and thine outstretched arm: 18 nothing is too difficult for thee: Showing mercy to thousands, and recompensing the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them, the great, the mighty God; 19 Jehovah of Hosts is his name. Great in counsel, and

lings and four pence, the whole amount of the purchase-money did not exceed two pounds sterling. The smallness of the sum may be accounted for partly by the field being inconsiderable in size, partly by its being then in the possession of the Chaldeans, and therefore the absolute uncertainty of the time that might elapse before Jeremiah or his heirs might derive any benefit from it. Michaelis and others have thought, that as *שֶׁקֶל*, *sheqel*, stands by itself, *ten* shekels of gold must be intended, but there is nothing in the text to warrant such conclusion.

10. Coined or stamped money not being in use among the Jews, the silver was weighed, as in the days of Abraham, Gen. xxiii. 16.

11. It is customary in the East to write out two documents when contracts are formed: the one signed by the parties, solemnly sealed in the presence of witnesses, and carefully preserved; the other is merely a copy, which is not sealed, and is left open.

14, 15. Special care was taken that the deed should sustain no injury from the length of time that should elapse before the Jews could recover their possessions in Palestine. The transaction was a symbol of the certainty of this recovery.

16, &c. In order to afford his countrymen an opportunity of fully understanding the import of the transaction, the prophet asks Jehovah how it computed

- powerful in action, whose eyes are open on all the ways of the children of men, to give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his deeds: Who hast placed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt to this day, and among Israel and among other men, and hast procured thee a name, as at this day: For thou didst bring out thy people Israel from the land of Egypt, with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror. And didst give them this land, which thou swarest to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. And they came in and possessed it; but they did not obey thy voice, neither did they walk in thy law, they have not done all that thou commandedst them to do, therefore this calamity hath come upon them. Behold! the mounds reach even to the city, to take it, and the city is delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans, who fight against it by means of the sword, and the famine, and the pestilence; and what thou hast spoken is come to pass, and behold! thou seest it. Yet, O Lord Jehovah! thou hast said to me, Buy thee the field with money, and take witnesses, though the city is delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans. Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah, saying, Behold! I Jehovah am the God of all flesh: can any thing be too difficult for me? Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, Behold! I will deliver this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and he shall take it. And the Chaldeans shall come, who fight against this city, and shall set this city on fire, and burn it; and the houses on the roofs of which they

with all that he had done for them, to give the land into the hands of the Chaldeans, and yet to command him to make the purchase.

20. That עָשָׂה is sometimes used idiomatically for *other men*, see Judges xviii. 25; Ps. lxxiii. 5. The meaning of the verse is not that Jehovah continuously wrought such miracles, both among the Jews and among other nations, as he had wrought in Egypt, but that the memory of those miracles was preserved among both. עָשָׂה, *Edom*, as Michaelis proposes to point, cannot be admitted.

24. The מִצֻּבֹּת, *mounds*, were the batteries or breastworks raised by the besieging army, behind which they employed their military engines, and which, being gradually carried forward, were at length advanced close to the walls of the city.

27. Jehovah, emphatically admitting the fact of his omnipotence, to which Jeremiah had appealed, ver. 17, proceeds to announce the certainty of the exile, and to describe the cause of it—the idolatrous practices of the Jews.

29. See on chap. xix. 13.

- have burned incense to Baal, and poured out libations to other  
 30 gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children of Israel  
 and the children of Judah have done that only which was  
 wicked in my sight from their youth; for the children of  
 31 Israel have done nothing but provoke me with the works of  
 their hands, saith Jehovah. For this city hath been an object  
 for my anger and for my fury, from the day it was built to this  
 33 day, that I should remove it from before me, Because of all  
 the wickedness of the children of Israel, and of the children  
 of Judah, which they have committed, to provoke me to  
 anger; they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their  
 prophets, and the men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jeru-  
 33 salem. For they have turned the back to me, and not the  
 face, though I taught them, rising early and teaching them,  
 34 yet they hearkened not, to receive instruction; They even  
 set up their abominations in the house that is called by my  
 35 name, to pollute it, And built the high-places of Baal,  
 which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their  
 sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Moloch,  
 which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind;  
 committing this abomination in order to make Judah sin.
- 36 But now, nevertheless, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of  
 Israel, concerning this city, of which ye say, It is delivered  
 into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by  
 37 the famine, and by the pestilence: Behold! I will collect  
 them from all the countries whither I have driven them in  
 mine anger, and in my fury, and in great indignation, and  
 will bring them back to this place, and cause them to dwell  
 35 in safety. And they shall be my people, and I will be their  
 39 God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, to fear  
 me continually, for good to them, and to their children after  
 40 them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them,  
 that I will not turn from them, to do them good; and I will  
 put my fear into their hearts, that they may not depart from

34, 35. See on chapter vii. 30, 31, and Comp. Ezek. viii. 5—17.

36.  $\text{פֶּן}$  is here strongly exceptive, and introduces a proposition, the very reverse of what we should have expected. So far from punishing the Jews with per-

petual exile, which their iniquitous conduct had merited, Jehovah graciously promises to restore them to their own land.

39—41. The spiritual promises here specified, together with the covenant to be made with the Jews, are essentially

- 41 me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and will assuredly plant them in this land, with all my heart, and with all my soul.
- 42 For thus saith Jehovah: Like as I have brought upon this people all this great calamity, so I will bring upon them all the good of which I have spoken to them. And the fields shall be purchased in this land, of which ye say, It is desolate, without man and beast; it is delivered into the hand of the
- 44 Chaldeans. They shall purchase fields for money, and subscribe the deeds and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the environs of Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountain, and in the cities of the plain, and in the cities of the south; for I will reverse their captivity, saith Jehovah.

identical with those described chap. xxxi. 31—34, and are yet to be realized in their experience as a people. God has never, since the Babylonish captivity, put his fear into their hearts to secure perpetual adherence to him, so far as genuine godliness is concerned; though, as it respects the rejection of idolatry, and an outward acknowledgment of him

as the one only God, this has been unquestionably secured.

42—44. Special promises of the restoration from Babylon, and the commencement of the bestowal of that temporal good which the prophet had predicted, and of which a symbolical pledge had been given when he purchased the field of Hanameel.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

This chapter contains a fresh prediction of the restoration from Babylon, 1—9, the temporal prosperity accompanying which is set forth by a beautiful enumeration of circumstances, 10—13. Then follows a renewal of the great promise of the Messiah, 14—16; the perpetuity of his regal and sacerdotal offices is repeatedly affirmed, 17—22; and an assurance is given, that the Hebrew people should not become extinct, but should have a national existence under rulers of their own, 23—26.

- 1 MOREOVER, the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the guard, saying:
- 2 Thus saith Jehovah who doeth it, Jehovah who formeth it, to establish it: Jehovah is his name.
- 3 Call to me, and I will answer thee,

1. See chap. xxxii. 2.

2. At עֲשֵׂה, יִצְרֶה, and יִקְוֶה, subaud. עֲשֵׂה, counsel, or purpose. For the pe-

culiar signification of עֲשֵׂה, see my Comment. on Hos. xii. 6.

3. בְּרָחוֹק, inaccessible, difficult things.

And show thee great and difficult things,  
Which thou hast not known.

- 4 For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel :  
Concerning the houses of this city,  
And concerning the houses of the kings of Judah,  
That have been pulled down for the ramparts,  
And for the swordsmen,
- 5 Coming to fight with the Chaldeans,  
And to fill them with the dead bodies of the men,  
Whom I have slain in mine anger, and in my fury ;  
Because I have hid my face from this city,  
On account of all their wickedness :
- 6 Behold ! I will restore to her cure and health ;  
And I will heal them, and reveal to them  
The abundance of peace and of truth.
- 7 For I will reverse the captivity of Judah,  
And the captivity of Israel ;  
And I will build them as at the first.
- 8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity,  
Of which they have been guilty against me ;  
And I will pardon all their iniquities,  
Of which they have been guilty against me,  
And by which they have rebelled against me.
- 9 And they shall be to me a joyful name,  
For praise, and for glory,  
Before all the nations of the earth,  
Which shall hear of all the good that I do to them ;  
And they shall fear and tremble,  
For all the good, and for all the prosperity  
Which I procure for them.

10 Thus saith Jehovah :

Rosenmüller: *imperscrutabilia, recondita apud Deum, quæ humano intellectui inaccessa sunt.* A few MSS. read *חֲסֻדִּים*, *hidden things*, but the reading has probably been borrowed from Is. xlviii. 6. The things referred to are the restoration of the Jews, and that of Jerusalem, which seemed during the exile to be prostrate beyond all hope of recovery.

4. The *חֲסֻדִּים* here mentioned, differed

from the *monads* called by the same name, chap. xxxii, 24, being the ramparts raised by the Jews for the defence of the city, whereas those were raised by the enemy for the purpose of attack. *חֲסֻדִּים*, *the sword*, is here used for *חֲסֻדִּים בָּרֶכֶת*, *men of the sword*, i.e. warriors who employ it in battle, as *חֲסֻדִּים בֹּרֶךְ*, is for those who use the bow. Is. xxi. 17.

6. For *חֲסֻדִּים בָּרֶכֶת*, see on chap. viii. 22.

- There shall yet be heard in this place,  
 Of which ye say, It is waste,  
 Without man, and without beast,  
 In the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem,  
 Which are desolated without man,  
 And without inhabitant, and without beast,  
 11 The sound of joy and the sound of gladness,  
 The sound of the bridegroom, and the sound of the bride,  
 The sound of those who say :  
 Praise ye Jehovah of Hosts,  
 For Jehovah is good,  
 For his mercy is everlasting ;  
 Even of those that bring the sacrifice of praise  
 Into the house of Jehovah ;  
 For I will reverse the captivity of the land,  
 As at the first, saith Jehovah.  
 12 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts ;  
 There shall again be in this place,  
 Which is waste, without man and beast,  
 And in all the cities thereof,  
 Habitations of shepherds,  
 Causing their flocks to lie down.  
 13 In the cities of the mountain,  
 In the cities of the plain,  
 And in the cities of the south :  
 And in the land of Benjamin,  
 And in the environs of Jerusalem,  
 And in the cities of Judah,  
 The flocks shall again pass  
 Under the hands of him that telleth them,  
 Saith Jehovah.  
 14 Behold the days come, saith Jehovah,

11. The words of praise here employed are those with which the 136th Psalm commences, which, it is implied, should again be sung in the temple. *הָשִׁיב אֶת־שְׁבוּתָם*, *To reverse the captivity*, does not here mean to restore the captives from their exile, but to restore the country from the circumstances of desolation to which

it had been reduced, although this naturally presupposed the restoration of its inhabitants.

12. *מִקְוֵה*, *Habitation*, is used collectively for habitations or dwelling-places.

14—16. These verses contain a repetition of the promise of the Messiah, made chap. xxiii. 5, 6. The only varia-

- When I will confirm the good promise  
Which I made to the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah.
- 15 In those days, and at that time  
I will cause to spring up to David  
The Branch of Righteousness :  
And He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.
- 16 In those days Judah shall be saved,  
And Jerusalem shall dwell securely :  
And this is the name by which He shall be called,  
JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

tions that require to be noticed, are the ellipsis of *his name*, after *this is*, and the change of *to him*, into *to her*, ver. 16, applying the name to Jerusalem, and not to the Branch, as we should have expected, and as we read in the parallel passage. The Syr. and the Targ. in the Antwerp Polyglott, point *in* in the masculine, and the Vulgate has *eum*, though some copies read *eam*. The Slavonic also has the masculine *ego*, his. If *he* be pointed *in*, which pointing of the masculine suffix is not uncommon in Hebrew, and which the commencement of the following verse would seem to require, both passages will perfectly harmonise.

17—26. Such serious difficulties have in these verses presented themselves in the way of interpreters, that some have been tempted to regard them as an interpolation. They are, indeed, together with vers. 14—16, altogether wanting in the LXX.; yet they are found in the version of Theodotion, as exhibited by Origen, in the Hexaplar Syriac, and the Arabic versions, and in the Comment. of Theodoret. They are also printed in the Complutensian edition of the LXX. The difficulties are created by the predictions of the absolute perpetuity of the Davidic and Levitical succession, 17, 18, 21, 22. If interpreted literally, what is said of the Levites holds good only till the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; but so much cannot be affirmed of the family of David, since no lineal descendant of that monarch occupied the Jewish throne after Zedekiah—the Asmonæan princes being of the tribe of Levi, while Herod was

not a Jew at all, but an Idumæan. That the prophecy relates to what will take place in the history of the Jews after their yet future restoration to Palestine, is equally objectionable, on the ground that their genealogical tables having long been irrecoverably lost, it cannot be conceived possible for them, without a miracle, to distinguish who are the descendants of David, and who those of Levi. Besides, according to the doctrine of the New Testament, no king of the family of David is to be recognised but the Messiah, and the seat of his government is not an earthly throne, but a heavenly: nor can the Levitical priesthood, with its services, be restored, they having been for ever abrogated by the introduction of the everlasting and unchangeable priesthood of Christ, their great antitype. Heb. vii. 12—23.

On these grounds we are shut up to the spiritual interpretation of the passage, or its application to the Messiah in his regal and sacerdotal offices in which, as their antitypes, those of the Jewish kings and priests, as the types, received their fulfilment. The throne of David, vers. 17, 21, is the spiritual throne, which, as his descendant, the Messiah is to fill for ever, Is. ix. 6; Luke i. 32, 33. And as the reign of David is thus carried forward spiritually, so, on the same principle, the Levites may be said never to want a man to present sacrifices, inasmuch as the man Christ Jesus ever liveth to present the merits of his own sacrifice, which, to express its excellence and superiority, is called *θυσιαί*, sacrifices, in the plural, Heb. ix. 23.



- 17 For thus saith Jehovah :  
 There shall not be wanting to David a man  
 Sitting on the throne of the house of Judah.
- 18 Neither shall there be wanting  
 From my presence,  
 A man of the priests, the Levites,  
 Offering holocausts,  
 And causing oblations to ascend,  
 And performing sacrifice continually.
- 19 The word of Jehovah was further communicated to Jeremiah,  
 saying :
- 20 Thus saith Jehovah :  
 If ye can break my covenant with the day,  
 And my covenant with the night,  
 So that there should not be day and night in their season ;
- 21 Then may also my covenant with David my servant be broken,  
 So that he should not have a son reigning on his throne ;  
 And with the Levites, the priests, my ministers.
- 22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered,  
 Nor the sand of the sea measured,  
 So will I multiply the seed of David my servant,  
 And the Levites that minister to me.
- 23 Moreover, the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah,  
 saying :
- 24 Dost thou not perceive what this people speak ? saying :  
 As for the two families which Jehovah had chosen,  
 He hath even cast them off.

17, 18. The promises here made are a repetition of those made Ps. lxxxix. 4, 29, 36 ; Num. xxv. 12, 13, only as accomplished in Him who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, and in whose one sacrifice all the legal offerings for ever merged.

20, 21. The perpetual succession of day and night, in virtue of the Divine ordinance to that effect, is appealed to as a pledge of the inviolability of the promise made by God both to David and the Levites. This promise is expressly called a covenant, Ps. lxxxix. 3, 28, 34 ; Num. xxv. 12, 13 ; Mal. ii. 4, 5, 8.

22. It is impossible to take " the seed of David " and " the Levites " here literally ; for in such case, the declaration, as Jahn and Hengstenberg remark, would be of the nature of a threatening rather than a blessing ; since the support of such a multitude of royal and priestly persons would be an intolerable burden to the state. The persons referred to are true believers, who are described in the New Testament as kings and priests, 1 Pet. ii. 5 ; Rev. i. 6.

24. Those who are thus said to speak contemptuously of the Hebrews as abandoned by their God, were doubtless

Thus they despise my people,  
As if it were no longer a people before them.

25 Thus saith Jehovah :

If there is not my covenant of day and of night,  
If I have not appointed the laws of heaven and earth ;

26 Then also may I reject the seed of Jacob,

And David my servant,

That I should not take of his seed to be rulers

To the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ;

But I will reverse their captivity, and show them pity.

the Chaldean army before Jerusalem. The two families were the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

26. As the literal Jews are introduced in the twenty-fourth verse in their national character, it is more natural to consider what is here said of the seed of Jacob and of David in the same light, than to take the terms in a spiritual acceptation, though, from the exigency of the case, we are compelled to put this construction upon them, ver. 22. There is no necessity for supposing that the prophet was not at liberty to use them now in the one acceptation, and now in the other—the circumstances of the context always affording some clue to enable the reader to determine which is intended, just as our Lord in the same

discourse uses the word *πνεῦμα* both as denoting the *Holy Spirit*, and the natural element of *wind*, John iii. 5—8, and of *νεκροί*, Matt. viii. 22, first as characterising such as are spiritually dead, and then those who are physically so. It is also more natural to interpret “the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” of the Jewish people properly taken—their restoration from captivity being specified as a distinguishing condition. The “seed of David” seems here to denote the Jews generally, and corresponds to the parallel “seed of Jacob;” and the meaning is that, at the happy time predicted, the Hebrew people should no longer be subject to foreign rule, but should be governed by native magistrates.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

This chapter contains two prophecies : the first relating to Zedekiah, 1—7 ; the second, to the conduct of the Jews, who, afraid of the capture of the city, had, in obedience to the requirement of the law, granted liberty to their servants at the expiration of seven years, but, on the intermission of the siege, compelled them to return to bondage, 8—16. On this account, they are threatened with destruction by the Chaldeans, 17—22.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the land of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all her cities, saying :

- 2 Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Go and speak to Zedekiah, king of Judah, and say to him, Thus saith Jehovah: Behold, I will deliver this city into the hand of  
 3 the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. And thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and shalt be delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon. And his mouth shall speak with thy mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.  
 4 Nevertheless, hear the word of Jehovah, O Zedekiah, king of Judah! Thus saith Jehovah concerning thee: Thou shalt  
 5 not die by the sword. In peace thou shalt die, and according to the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, shall they burn for thee; and with "Alas! Lord," shall they bewail thee: surely I have spoken the word, saith Jehovah.  
 6 And Jeremiah the prophet spake to Zedekiah the king of  
 7 Judah all these words in Jerusalem, when the army of the king of Babylon fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah; for these remained among the cities of Judah, fortified cities.  
 8 The word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah,

2. The following prediction belongs in point of time to chap. xxxii. 1—5, and is merely an amplification of what is contained in those verses. It was consequently delivered before Jeremiah was placed in custody. *הָיָה*, the infinitive absolute for the imperative, conveying here the idea of future action, gives the converse power to the conjunction in *וְהָיָה* twice following, and thus furnishes a future equivalent to an imperative.

4, 5. Though Zedekiah was to be carried captive to Babylon, yet he is graciously assured of kind treatment on the part of the hostile king, and of an honourable interment. Some have inferred that the removal of his dead body for interment at Jerusalem is implied; but all that the words express is that he should receive the honours of a royal funeral, which might be rendered to him in Babylon, as well as in his captured city. The prediction is absolute, and

not conditional, as Venema and Michaelis maintain. The announcement: "hear the word of Jehovah," merely calls the attention of Zedekiah to the following prophecy, and not to obedience to any admonitions of the prophet, as the condition of his remaining in Jerusalem. The burnings referred to were those of spices, the fragrance of which filled the air, and which were customary at royal funerals. 2 Chron. xvi. 14; xxi. 19. Instead of *וְהָיָה*, and with the burnings, twenty-eight MSS., many of which are of the superior Spanish class, originally three more, and eight by correction, together with the LXX., Arab., Syr., and Vulg., read *וְכַדְוָה*, and like, or according to the burnings. Those who should accompany these burnings with the lamentation "Alas! Lord," may be supposed to be the attendants of Zedekiah, who had been carried with him to Babylon.

8, 9. Michaelis is of opinion, that

after king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people  
 9 who were in Jerusalem, proclaiming liberty to them ; That  
 every one should send away his man-servant, and every one  
 his maid-servant, the Hebrew and the Hebrewess, free ; that  
 they should not hold them in servitude, any one a Jew his  
 10 brother. Now when all the princes and all the people who  
 had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should  
 send away his man-servant, and every one his maid-servant  
 free, that they should no longer hold them in servitude, they  
 11 obeyed, and sent them away. But afterward they caused the  
 men-servants, and the maid-servants which they had sent  
 away free, to come back, and compelled them to be men-  
 12 servants and maid-servants. Therefore the word of Jehovah  
 was communicated to Jeremiab, from Jehovah, saying,  
 13 Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel : I made a covenant  
 with your fathers in the day when I brought them out from  
 14 the land of Egypt, from the house of servants, saying : At  
 the end of seven years ye shall send away every one his  
 brother the Hebrew, who may have been sold to thee, and  
 who hath served thee six years, thou shalt even send him  
 away free from thee ; but your fathers hearkened not to me,  
 15 neither did they incline their ear. And ye had this day  
 turned, and done that which is right in my sight, proclaiming  
 every one liberty to his neighbour, and had made a covenant  
 16 before me in the temple which is called by my name. But  
 ye have again turned and polluted my name, and have caused  
 to return, every one his man-servant, and every one his  
 maid-servant, whom ye had sent away free at their pleasure,  
 and have compelled them to become your man-servants and  
 maid-servants.

17 Therefore thus saith Jehovah : ye have not hearkened to me,  
 Zedekiah, in binding over the Jews to  
 comply with the enactment of the Mosaic  
 law, to give their servants liberty at the  
 expiration of seven years, ver. 14, Exod.  
 xxi. 2, Deut. xv. 12, was not influenced  
 by merely conscientious, or religious, but  
 by political motives ; as thereby he would  
 greatly increase the number of volun-  
 teers for the defence of the city.

11. It appears from vers. 21, 22, that  
 the Chaldean army raised the siege of

Jerusalem for a time, most probably to  
 meet the Egyptian expedition, mentioned  
 chap. xxxvii. 7. During this cessation  
 of hostilities, the Hebrew masters finding  
 that those whom they had set free were  
 not required for the defence of the city,  
 retracted their deed of release, and, con-  
 trary to law, compelled them to re-enter  
 their service.

17. As it was the duty of the master  
 to protect his servants, so Jehovah would

- proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every one to his neighbour: Behold! I will proclaim liberty for you, saith Jehovah, to the sword, and to the famine, and to the pestilence, and I will give you up to agitation to all the nations of the earth. And I will deliver the men, who have transgressed my covenant, who have not confirmed the words of the covenant which they made before me, the calf which they cut in two, and passed through between the parts thereof; the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, who have passed between the parts of the calf, I will even deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life; and their dead bodies shall become food for the birds of the air, and for the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah king of Judah, and his princes, I will deliver into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, who are gone up from you. Behold! I will command, saith Jehovah, and bring them back to this city, and they shall fight against it, and shall take it, and shall burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

have thrown his protection over his people, if they had rendered to him due subjection and obedience; but on their wantonly renouncing these, he declares that he would give them up to the unrestrained operation of all the hostile influences that might be brought to bear upon them. חַרְבִּי, the term used in the Mosaic law for *liberty*, or *manumission*, Lev. xxv. 10, is derived from חָרַב, *to turn swiftly round*, to *more fleetly*, without any impediment. It is to the fulfilment of the threatening contained in this verse, and to its cause, that Jeremiah refers, Lament. i. 3.

18—20. It was customary on the making of covenants for the contracting parties to slay an animal, and then pass through between the parts after it was

divided, implying by this action their willingness to be so treated, if they failed in adhering to the stipulations. See Gen. xv. 10, 17. Hence the phrases חַרְבִּי חָרַב, *ῥρκια τέμνειν*, *icere fœdus*. Comp. Iliad iii. 298.

Zeῦ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, καὶ ἀθάνatoi θεοὶ ἄλλοι,  
 Ὅπποτεροι πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ῥρκια πημή-  
 νειων,  
 Ὡδέ σφ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέοι, ὡς ὅδε οἶνος,  
 Λύτῶν, καὶ τεκέων'

and Plutarch in Quæstt. Romanis:—

Βοιωτοῖς δὴ δημοσίᾳ καθαρμός ἐστι κυνὸς διχοτομηθέντος τῶν μερῶν διε-  
 ξελθεῖν.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

IN order to produce a striking contrast to the rebellious disposition of the Jews, Jeremiah is ordered to put the obedience of the Rechabites to the test, by offering them wine to drink, the use of which had been strictly prohibited by their father, 1—11. Occasion is taken from their refusal, to reprove the Jews, 12—17, and to pronounce a blessing on the Rechabites, 18, 19.

- 1 The word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah,
- 2 saying: Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak to them, and bring them into the house of Jehovah, and bring them into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.
- 3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habatziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole
- 4 house of the Rechabites; And I brought them into the temple of Jehovah, to the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaiah, a man of God, which was beside the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah, the
- 5 son of Shallum, the keeper of the door. And I placed before the sons of the house of the Rechabites goblets full of wine,
- 6 and cups; and I said to them, Drink wine. But they said, We will not drink wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall not drink wine, ye,
- 7 nor your children for ever. Neither shall ye build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards, nor possess them; but ye shall dwell in tents all your days, that ye may live many
- 8 days on the surface of the ground where ye sojourn. And

2. The Rechabites were a tribe of Arabs, of the family of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who came into Palestine at the same time with the Israelites, but, in order to maintain their independence, occupied no fixed settlements, but led a nomadic life, and were thus able without difficulty to remove on any attempt being made to subdue them. Judges i. 16; 1 Sam. xv. 6. Though not incorporated with the Hebrews, Jahu thinks they were proselytes of the gate. They adhered with the most rigorous strictness to the charge of Jonadab the son of their

founder, not to drink wine, and, that they might not be tempted to do so, not to plant any vineyards, nor to have houses and fields. According to Diod. Sic. xix. 94, the Nabathæans had the same custom: νόμος δ' ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς, μήτε σίτον σπεῖρειν, μήτε φυτεύειν, μήτε οἶνον χρῆσθαι, μήτε οἰκίαν κατασκευάζειν; to observe which they pledged themselves under pain of death. Mention is made of Jonadab as zealous for the God of Israel, 2 Kings x. 15—23. יְהוֹנָדָב is used, as elsewhere in Jeremiah, for יְהוֹנָדָב.

- we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, in regard to all that he commanded us, not to drink wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters; And not to build houses for us to dwell in, neither have we any vineyards, nor fields, nor seed; but we dwell in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. But it came to pass when Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, let us go to Jerusalem from the army of the Chaldeans, and from the army of Syria; so we dwell in Jerusalem.
- Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah, saying: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: Go and say to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction, to listen to my words? saith Jehovah. The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his children not to drink wine, are performed: for they have not drunk it to this day, but have obeyed the command of their father: and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but ye have not listened to me. For I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending, saying: Turn ye, now, every one from his wicked way, and reform your deeds, and follow not other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you, and to your fathers, but ye inclined not your ear, neither did ye listen to me. Because the sons of Jonadab have performed the command of their father, which he gave them, but this people have not listened to me; therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold! I will bring on Judah, and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the calamity with which I have threatened them; because I have spoken to them, but they have not heard: and I have called to them, but they have not answered.
- And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Because ye have obeyed

11. At the time here referred to, they Syrians, within the walls of Jerusalem had taken refuge from the Chaldeans and

- the command of Jonadab your father, and have observed all his charges, and have done according to all that he commanded you; therefore thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

19. Whether the Rechabites still exist in Arabia has been doubted; but Dr. Wolff supposed he received notices of them when travelling in those parts. A positive promise of their separate ex-

istence as a tribe, is given in this verse, but its accomplishment may have been dependent upon the fidelity with which their descendants kept their pledge.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Baruch writes the prophecies of Jeremiah at his dictation on a roll, 1—8; reads them to the people who had come to worship in the temple, 9, 10; and at the request of the princes, to whom information of the fact had been conveyed, repairs to the royal palace, where they were assembled, and after reading to them what he had written, relates to them how he had done so by dictation, 11—19. He is then warned to secrete himself and Jeremiah, while they inform the king of the contents of the roll, which had been deposited in the secretary's chamber; on which the king sends for it and orders it to be read to him, but, on hearing only a few columns, he is filled with rage, and cutting it, recklessly throws it into the fire, 20—25; while concealed from the fury of the monarch, Jeremiah receives a divine charge to write the same prophecies on another roll, and to accompany them with a specific prediction of the miserable end of Jehoiakim, and of the certain destruction of the Jews, 26—32.

- 1 And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word was communicated to
- 2 Jeremiah, from Jehovah, saying: Take thee a roll of a book, and write on it all the words which I have spoken to thee, concerning Israel, and concerning Judah, and concerning all
- 3 the nations, from the day I spake to thee, from the days of Josiah till this day. Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I purpose to inflict upon them, in order that they may turn, every one from his wicked way, and I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

1, 2. Though the command to write ver. 9. ~~to write~~ *a book-roll*, i.e. a book the prophecies on a roll, was given in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, yet they were consisting of a roll made up of skins, scraped and smoothed for use. Comp. not publicly read till the following year, Ps. xl. 8, where the same phrase is used



- 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken to him, on a roll of a book. And Jeremiah charged Baruch, saying: I am shut up, I cannot go into the house of Jehovah: but go thou and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of Jehovah, in the hearing of the people, in the house of Jehovah, on a fast day; and also in the hearing of all Judah that come from their cities, thou shalt read them. Perhaps their supplication may be humbly presented before Jehovah, and they may turn, every one from his wicked way; for great is the wrath and the fury which Jehovah hath denounced against this people. And Baruch, the son of Neriah, did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet charged him, reading in the book the words of Jehovah in the house of Jehovah.
- 9 And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, proclaimed a fast before Jehovah. And Baruch read in the book the words of Jeremiah, in the house of Jehovah, in the chamber of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, at the entrance of the new gate of the house of Jehovah, in the hearing of all

to describe the Pentateuch. Hitzig contends that the word *קִיטָה*, was not in use before the time of Jeremiah, and could only have been employed after parchment was adopted as a writing-material. Whether his object in making this assertion was to bring down the date of the above Psalm to the time of our prophet, I will not affirm; but he has no authority for fixing upon this as the time when parchment was invented. Herodotus relates, that the Ionians, from the earliest period, wrote on goat and sheepskin; and, familiar as the Hebrews evidently were with dressing skins at the time of their progress from Egypt, there is every reason to suppose that Moses employed such materials in writing the Pentateuch.

5. We have no account of the confinement of Jeremiah in the days of Jehoiakim, but it is clear from this verse that he

was in custody at the time, though, as may be inferred from ver. 26, he was not in any public prison. Perhaps he was only shut up in his own house.

7. The phrase *קָטַלְתָּהּ* means to allow a petition to be laid at the feet of a superior, which is done in the East, by the suppliant's falling prostrate upon the ground.

9. The fast spoken of here, and prophetically, ver. 7, was most likely occasioned by the victories of Nebuchadnezzar, which took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and filled the whole of Asia with terror. The institution of this fast is ascribed, not to the monarch, who appears to have been an altogether irreligious prince, but to the people, who had taken alarm at the threatening aspect of the politics of the day.

10. The *לְשָׁבוֹת* were chambers in the

- 11 the people. And Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of Jehovah from the book ;
- 12 and he went down to the house of the king, to the chamber of the secretary : and behold ! all the princes were sitting there ; Elishama, the secretary, and Delaiah, the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan, the son of Achbor, and Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah, the son of Hananiah, and
- 13 all the princes. And Micaiah declared to them all the words which he had heard while Baruch was reading in the book in
- 14 the hearing of the people. Then all the princes sent to Baruch Jehudi, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, saying, The roll in which thou didst read in the hearing of the people, take in thy hand, and come : and Baruch, the son of Neriah, took the roll in his hand,
- 15 and came to them. And they said to him, Sit down now, and read it in our hearing, and Baruch read in their
- 16 hearing. And it came to pass, when they heard all the words, they were afraid, each with his neighbour ; and they said to Baruch, We will certainly apprise the king of all
- 17 these words. And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now,
- 18 how didst thou write all these words from his mouth ? And Baruch said to them, He dictated to me all these words, and

courts of the temple, mostly at the gates, which were occupied by the priests and Levites, and where the various things necessary for the temple-service were kept. It was from the balcony of one of these, that Baruch read to the people assembled in the court below. The word רֹאשׁ is used, ver. 12, of the chamber in the royal palace occupied by the secretary of state.

11. It is not improbable that Micaiah, the grandson of Shaphan, like most of the family, of whom honourable mention is made, was a pious person, and in communicating the information respecting Baruch, was actuated by religious motives, produced by what he had heard read. He did not, therefore, give the information with the view of bringing Baruch or Jeremiah into trouble.

12. The officers and princes appear to have been holding a council of state when the information reached them.

14. What office Jehudi held is not known ; but that he was of a good family may be inferred from the particularity with which his ancestors are mentioned. From his being despatched to Baruch, however, it would seem that he filled some subordinate station.

15. Michaelis deems it improbable that a scribe, such as Baruch, should be requested to sit in the presence of the royal councillors, and proposes to read וְקָרָא, *turn* and read, or read *again*, instead of וְשָׁמַע, *sit*, and appeals in support of his opinion to πάλιν ἀνάγνωθι of the LXX., and וְשָׁמַע of the Targ. His conjecture, however, is not confirmed by any MS. authority.

17, 18. The princes were so impressed by the awful denunciations which they heard, that they were anxious to ascertain whether they had really been delivered by the prophet, or whether Baruch might have written them without his

- 19 I wrote them in the book with ink. Then said the princes to Baruch, Go, hide thyself, thou and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you are.
- 20 And they went in to the king into the court, but deposited the book in the chamber of Elishama, the secretary; and they
- 21 related all the words in the hearing of the king. And the king sent Jehudi to take the roll, and he took it out of the chamber of Elishama the secretary, and Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king, and in the hearing of all the princes
- 22 who stood beside the king. Now the king was sitting in the winter-palace, in the ninth month, and the stove was burning
- 23 before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, he cut it with a penknife, and threw it into the fire which was in the stove, till all the roll was

authority or knowledge, merely at random, and without being able to vouch for their accuracy. It is maintained by Bertholdt and Ilitzig that, in dictating to Baruch, our prophet read his communications from MSS. which he had formerly written, or which had been written by others. The only reason assigned for this opinion is, that it is in the highest degree improbable that he could have imagined himself capable of reciting them from memory after the lapse of twenty years. But, not to insist upon the aid which he might warrantably expect from the Spirit of inspiration, it appears evident from the reply made by Baruch, who, when asked how he had written the matters which he had read to the people, affirmed that it was simply by oral dictation on the part of the prophet. It is true, the same verb, *קרא*, is employed, which is properly rendered by *read* in other parts of the chapter; but, instead of its being said that he read, *קרא*, from a book, or *קרא*, from a roll, it is expressly stated that *קרא*, he read, dictated, or recited, from his mouth; phraseology which could only be intended to convey the idea that the dictation was purely oral, or, according to our analogous idiom, *by word of mouth*. *יָיִן*, ink, occurs only here. Chald. *ܕܝܢܐ*.

Syr. *ܕܝܢܐ*. Arab. *دواة*, *atramentarium*. The substantive is supposed to be de-

rived from *אֵי*, to be black. Comp. the Greek *μέλαν*, ink, from *μέλας*, black. Blayney's resolution of the word cannot be sustained. The specification of the material with which he wrote, was quite natural to a person situated as Baruch was.

19. Jeremiah, being probably only under house-arrest, would find no difficulty in availing himself of the advice given by the princes.

22. In the East, neither chimneys nor ovens are used, but, when the weather is cold, a pitcher of brass or iron, containing burning wood, or charcoal, is used for the purpose of warming the chambers, and when the wood has burned to embers, a cover is placed over the pot to make it retain the heat. Blayney's conjecture, that for *קרא* we should read *קרא*, is altogether gratuitous. Furst derives the word *קרא* from *קרא*, to glow, or burn. Comp. the Arab. *جاء*, arsit. *أك*, ferbuit.

23. The *ספרים* were not the leaves of the book, as Ilitzig contends, but the columns of writing on the parchment, so called from their resemblance in form to doors. *ספר*, literally the writer's knife, which is employed for cutting and trimming the reed with which the scribes in the East write. It is uncertain whether Jehudi or the king cut the roll, and threw it into the fire, but it is more likely it was the latter, except we suppose that

- 24 consumed in the fire which was in the stove. And they were not afraid, neither did they rend their garments, neither the king, nor any of his ministers, who heard all these words. Nevertheless Elnathan, and Delaiah, and Gemariah interceded with the king that the roll might not be burned, but he would not listen to them. And the king commanded Jerahmeel, the king's son, and Seraiah, the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah, the son of Abdeel, to apprehend Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but Jehovah hid them.
- 27 Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah after the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch had written from the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,
- 28 Take thee again another roll, and write on it all the former words which were on the former roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah burnt. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Thus saith Jehovah, Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written on it? saying, The king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and cause man and beast to cease from it. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, concerning Jehoiakim, king of Judah, He shall not have one sitting on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be thrown out to the heat by day, and to the frost by night. And I will punish him, and his seed, and his ministers, for their iniquity, and I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the men of Judah, all the calamity with which I have threatened them, but they did not listen.
- 32 Then Jeremiah took another roll, and gave it to Baruch, the

he had shown such marks of indignation, as to inspire Jehudi with the conviction, that if he did it, the act would gratify the monarch.

24, 25. There obviously existed a difference of character between the counsellors and the courtiers, or ministers of the king. While the latter were unmoved by what they had heard, the former regarded the document as containing a message from God.

30. Comp. chap. xxii. 18, 19. The words *וְהָיָה כְּכִלְיָהוּ*, there shall

*not be to him one sitting on the throne of David*, do not imply that he should have no successor, as Hitzig construes them, and then has the hardihood to affirm, that they were not fulfilled; but that none of his posterity should occupy the throne, which accords with fact.—In the East, while it is extremely hot during the day, the nights are sometimes proportionally cold. Comp. Gen. xxxi. 40.

32. It is not clear whether the additional predictions were placed upon the roll at the time, or whether they were

son of Neriah, the scribe, and he wrote on it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim, king of Judah, had burned in the fire : and he further added to them many words such as these.

supplemented at a subsequent period. If we adopt the latter supposition, it will serve to support the fact which many have assumed, that Baruch was afterwards regularly employed by Jeremiah in committing his prophecies to writing. Comp. chap. xlv. At all events

it will account for those chapters which belong to the time of Zedekiah, the successor of Jehoiakim, in whose reign the roll was written, being found among the rest ; only allowing that they were not entered in the order in which they now appear.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Chaldean army having raised the siege in order to meet that of Pharaoh, Zedekiah sends a messenger to Jeremiah, with the request, that he would pray to Jehovah on behalf of the Jews, 1—5 ; to which he receives the reply, that their enemies should return and take Jerusalem, 6—10. Availing himself of the absence of the Chaldeans, Jeremiah attempts to leave the city and retire to his native place, but is arrested as a deserter, and thrown into prison, 11—15. The king, after having a private conference with him, abates the rigour of his confinement, 16—21.

- 1 And king Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made king in
- 2 the land of Judah. But he, and his ministers, and the people of the land did not hearken to the words of Jehovah, which he
- 3 spake by Jeremiah the prophet. And king Zedekiah sent Jehuchal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of
- 4 Maaseiah the priest to Jeremiah the prophet saying : Pray now for us to Jehovah our God. Now Jeremiah came in
- 5 and went out among the people ; for they had not committed him to prison. And the army of Pharaoh had come out from Egypt ; and the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the report of them, and went up from Jerusalem.

1. From this chapter to the 44th inclusive, we have little else than an account of events chiefly relating to the personal history of the prophet. *וַיֵּשֶׁב*, *whom*, refers to Zedekiah, and not to Coniah. 2 Kings xxiv. 17.

3—5. Zedekiah, uncertain what might be the issue of the conflict between the

Chaldeans and Egyptians, but probably alarmed by some indications on the part of the former of a design to resume the siege of Jerusalem which they had raised, was anxious to obtain information from Jehovah, whose favour he solicited through the prayers of Jeremiah. The mission sent to the prophet was different

- 6 Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah the  
 7 prophet, saying : Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel : Thus  
 shall ye say to the king of Judah, who hath sent you to me  
 to inquire of me ; Behold, the army of Pharaoh, which hath  
 come out for your help, shall return to Egypt their own land.  
 8 And the Chaldeans shall return and fight against this city ;  
 9 and they shall take it, and shall burn it with fire. Thus  
 saith Jehovah : Deceive not yourselves, saying, the Chaldeans  
 10 will entirely depart from us ; for they shall not depart. For  
 though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans who  
 are at war with you, and there remained of them only  
 wounded men, yet they should rise, every one in his tent, and  
 burn this city with fire.
- 11 And it came to pass, when the army of the Chaldeans were gone  
 12 up from Jerusalem because of the army of Pharaoh, that  
 Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem, to go into the land of  
 Benjamin, that he might take his portion thence among the  
 13 people. And as he was in the gate of Benjamin, there was  
 an officer of the guard there, whose name was Jirijah, the  
 son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah ; and he apprehended  
 14 Jeremiah the prophet, saying : Thou art going over to the  
 Chaldeans. But Jeremiah said, It is false, I am not going  
 over to the Chaldeans ; but Jirijah would not listen to him,  
 but apprehended Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

from that mentioned chapter xxi. 1, 2 ; for, though Zephaniah is named in both places, yet Pashhur accompanied him on the former occasion, Jehuchal on this.

6—10. The divine reply was not more favourable in the present instance, than it had been in the former. See chap. xxi.

12. The words *וַיֵּצֵא יֵרֵמְיָהוּ מִן הַיְּדֵי הַבְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן*, Kimchi, our common version (in the margin), Rosenmüller, Dahler, and some others, construe to mean, that Jeremiah *slipped away* from Jerusalem in order to secure his personal safety ; but this construction is entirely founded on the circumstance, that *וַיֵּצֵא* signifies *to be smooth*, like *וַיֵּצֵא* and *וַיֵּצֵא*, which are used in reference to escaping by slipping away from danger. *וַיֵּצֵא*, however, is never thus used, but

signifies either to make smooth or *divide*, in which last acceptation it is very often employed in reference to possessions. It is so taken here by the Vulg., Targ., Syr. *וַיֵּצֵא* for the regular Hiphil *וַיֵּצֵא*. The object of Jeremiah in retiring into Benjamin, was that he might avail himself of the produce of the property which he possessed there, and which he might require during the further siege of the city. That no reference can be had to the field which he purchased from Hanameel, chap. xxxii. is clear, since that purchase was not effected till after the present transaction.

13. *וַיֵּצֵא*, especially when followed by *וַיֵּצֵא* or *וַיֵּצֵא*, signifies *to fall away, desert, or go over to another party*. 1 Sam. xxxix. 3 ; Jer. xxi. 9, xxxix. 9.

- 15 And the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and smote him ;  
and they committed him to prison, in the house of Jonathan  
the secretary, for they had made it the prison.
- 16 When Jeremiah had entered into the dungeon and into the  
17 vaults, and Jeremiah had remained there many days : then  
king Zedekiah sent and took him, and the king asked him  
secretly in his house, and said, Is there a word from Jehovah?  
and Jeremiah said, There is ; and he said, Thou shalt be de-  
livered into the hand of the king of Babylon. Then Jeremiah  
18 said to king Zedekiah, What offence have I committed against  
thee, or against thy ministers, or against this people, that ye  
19 have put me in prison ? And where are your prophets who  
prophesied to you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not  
20 come against you, nor against this land. Therefore let my  
lord the king listen now, I pray ; let my supplication be  
humbly presented before thee, and permit me not to be sent  
back to the house of Jonathan the secretary, that I die not  
21 there. And Zedekiah the king ordered that they should  
commit Jeremiah to the court of the guard, and that there  
should be given to him daily a cake of bread from the bakers'  
street, till all the bread in the city were spent : and Jeremiah  
remained in the court of the guard.

15, 16. The princes at the court of Zedekiah were not the same who had been at that of Jehoiakim, and who were affected on hearing the predictions of Jeremiah read by Baruch, chap. xxxvi. 16, 19. Strange as it may appear to us, it is no uncommon thing in the East to appropriate some part of the private house of a public officer, to serve as a prison. That selected for the reception of Jeremiah, appears to have been of a squalid description, consisting of a well or *pit*, with *vaults* round the sides, in which the prisoners were lodged. Some have thought that קְיָאִים mean *curved-posts* or *stocks*, in which they were held in a

bent and distorted posture ; but the word seems rather to be descriptive of *arched cavities* or *vaults*.

17, 18. We have here a striking instance of the bold and uncompromising fidelity of the Hebrew prophets. If Jeremiah had consulted his temporal interests, he would have prophesied smooth things to the king ; but, regardless of consequences, he unreservedly announces to Zedekiah his capture by the Chaldeans.

19. The ׀ in יִשְׁ׀ is paragogic, and the word is quite equivalent to יִשְׁׁ of the Keri.

21. Comp. Prov. xxviii. 23.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Jeremiah predicts the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, 1—3. For this he was cast into a miserable dungeon, in which he must have perished, had not Ebedmelech obtained the royal leave to transfer him to his former place of confinement, 4—13. The rest of the chapter contains an account of what transpired at a secret interview between the king and the prophet, 14—28.

- 1 AND Shephatiah, the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashhur heard, as did also Juchal, the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur, the son of Malchiah, the words which Jeremiah spake to all the people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out to the Chaldeans shall live; yea his life shall be to him for a prey, and he shall live. Thus saith Jehovah: This city shall certainly be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. Therefore the princes said to the king, Let now this man be put to death, for by this means he weakeneth the hands of the military that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, speaking to them according to these words; for this man does not seek the peace of this people, but their destruction. And Zedekiah the king said, Behold! he is in your hand; for the king can do nothing against you. Then they took Jeremiah and threw him into the dungeon of Malchijah, the son of the king, which was in the court of the guard, and they let Jeremiah down with ropes; and in the dungeon was no water, but mire, and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

4. The princes might justly have accused Jeremiah of fostering rebellion, if he had not afforded incontestable evidence that he held a divine commission, or if the government itself had not been in a false position; but Zedekiah, who was evidently a weak prince, had been prevailed upon by his courtiers to rebel against the king of Babylon; and, as there was no hope of being able to hold out against his army, it was for the good of the people, on the principles of mere human policy, to advise them to sur-

render. The execution of the prophet, therefore, would have been unjust.

5. The king was evidently disgusted at the conduct of the princes, but acknowledged his impotence to carry any measure without their concurrence—a thing very unusual with Oriental monarchs. He would have protected Jeremiah, if he had been able.

6. The prison, into which Jeremiah was now thrown, was a cistern which had been emptied of its water during the siege, and in which nothing remained



- 7 Now when Ebedmelech the Cushite, an eunuch who was in the house of the king, heard that they had committed Jeremiah to the dungeon, and that the king was sitting in the gate of Benjamin, Ebedmelech went from the house of the king, and spake to the king, saying, My Lord, O king! these men have acted unjustly in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have thrown into the dungeon; for he will die of hunger in the place where he is, because there is no longer any bread in the city. Then the king ordered Ebedmelech the Cushite, saying, Take hence at thy disposal thirty men, and take up Jeremiah out of the dungeon before he die. And Ebedmelech took the men at his disposal, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old torn clothes, and old worn-out garments, and let them down to Jeremiah by cords into the dungeon. And Ebedmelech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, Put now the old torn and worn-out clothes under thine armholes, under the cords; and Jeremiah did so. And they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, and brought him up out of the dungeon; and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.
- 14 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet to him into the third entrance, which was in the temple of Jehovah; and the king said to Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing, hide nothing from me. Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, If I should tell thee, wilt thou not certainly put me to death? and if I should give thee advice, thou wilt not listen to me. Then Zedekiah the king sware secretly to Jeremiah, saying, As Jehovah liveth, he who hath made us this soul,

but the slime at the bottom. Its depth forbade all hope of escape.

7—9. Ebedmelech was in all probability the keeper of the royal harem, and as such, according to the custom of the East, had private access to the king, and opportunities of familiar conversation with him. Michaelis remarks that the eunuchs of the present day, to whom the charge of the harems is committed, are mostly from Nubia or Abyssinia.

10. As thirty men would not have been wanted merely for drawing up Jeremiah out of the cistern, the king must

have ordered them for the protection of Ebedmelech against any preventive measures that might have been adopted by the princes.

14. Various conjectures have been advanced respecting the *שְׁעָה*, *entrance*, here referred to, but nothing satisfactory has been advanced. The curious reader may consult Blayney. So much is certain, that it must have been some retired part of the Temple, favourable to the privacy of confidential conversation.

16. *וְאֵל*, which is left unpointed in the text, is altogether omitted in nineteen

I will not put thee to death, neither will I deliver thee into the hand of these men who seek thy life.

- 17 Then said Jeremiah to Zedekiah, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel, If thou wilt voluntarily go out to the princes of the king of Babylon, thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire, but thou shalt live, and  
18 thy house. But if thou wilt not go out to the princes of the king of Babylon, then shall this city be delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire; and  
19 thou shalt not escape out of their hand. Then said Zedekiah the king to Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hands,  
20 and they will mock me. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee; obey now the voice of Jehovah in reference to that which I say to thee, that it may be well with thee, and  
21 thy soul may live. But if thou refuse to go out, this is the  
22 word which Jehovah hath shown me: Behold! all the women who are left in the house of the king of Judah shall be brought out to the princes of the king of Babylon; and they shall say:

Thy friends have incited thee, and have prevailed with thee;

Thy feet are sunk in the mire, they are turned away back!

- 23 And all thy wives, and thy children they shall bring out to the Chaldeans, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand;

MSS. and eight more originally, and is marked by the Masoretes כחב לא קרי, *i.e.* written, but not to be read. This, however, is not the only instance in which this particle is placed, for the sake of emphasis, before the nominative case, in the prophecies of Jeremiah.

17. Nebuchadnezzar himself was not present at the siege, but had fixed his quarters at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, 2 Kings xxv. 6. חב לא קרי expresses intensity, and, in such cases as the present, the voluntariness of the action. While the councillors of Zedekiah, who had effected the revolt from the king of Babylon, had no reason to hope that they might escape without punishment, that monarch himself might expect, if he surrendered to the Chaldeans, to be treated with leniency, and even to be

confirmed in his position as a tributary king.

22. It would appear from what is here stated, that many of the female inmates of the palace had been carried off by the pestilence or famine,—a less dishonourable fate than that of those who should fall into the power of the enemy. Zedekiah had expressed his fear lest he should be made the butt of mockery on the part of the Jewish deserters, in case he surrendered to the Chaldeans. The prophet now informs him that if he refused to submit, he would become the object of more cutting derision on the part of his own mistresses, who, in order the more to gratify their new lords, would exult over his fallen condition. The “friends” of the king were his ministers and the false prophets. The language to be em-

for thou shalt be seized by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city shall be burned with fire.

- 24 Then said Zedekiah to Jeremiah, Let no man know of these  
25 words, that thou die not. But if the princes should hear that I have spoken with thee, and shall come to thee, and say to thee, Tell us now what thou hast said to the king, conceal it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the  
26 king said to thee. Then thou shalt say to them, I presented my humble supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to the house of Jonathan, to die there.  
27 And all the princes came to Jeremiah, and asked him, and he told them according to all these words which the king had ordered him; and they went away in silence from him, for  
28 the conversation was not overheard. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard till the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was there when Jerusalem was taken.

ployed by the female captives is poetic in form. נָסְבוּ אֲחֵיהֶם, *they are turned away back*, refer not to the feet of the king, but to his friends who had seduced him, and then left him in the lurch.

26, 27. The princes, who had had their spies upon the proceedings of the king, were anxious to ascertain what had passed between him and Jeremiah; but having no right to the information, Jeremiah is to be justified in confining himself to the single point relative to his not being again cast into the dungeon, which, there is every reason to believe, was in accordance with truth. There having been

none present at the interview, who could bear witness to the contrary, the princes were obliged to let the matter pass.

28. The words: וְהָיָה כִּי יִלְכְּדוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם, *and he was (there) when Jerusalem was taken*, are omitted in three MSS., and have been originally omitted in three more, as they are in the LXX., Arab., and Syr. versions. In some other MSS. a space is left for them. Some interpreters would make them begin the next chapter; but they less aptly fit in there than they do here, if only we supply the adverb יָמָם, which I have taken the liberty to express in the version.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

This chapter consists of two parts: the first contains an account of the capture of Jerusalem, the flight, seizure, and punishment of Zedekiah, the removal of the people as captives to Babylon, and the fate of Jeremiah, 1—14; the second relates to a message which the prophet had been charged by Jehovah to deliver to Ebedmelech, assuring him of his safety in the midst of the catastrophe, 15—18.

Verses 1, 2, 4—13 are printed in small italics in the translation of Ewald, who considers them to be interpolations by a later hand, taken for the most part from chapter lii. and 2 Kings xxv.; but neither the reasons which he assigns for the

opinion, nor those of Hitzig, who, as usual, deals much in the minutiae, are at all satisfactory. It is, however, to be observed, that verses 4—13 are not in the Vatican edition of the LXX., though they have been adopted by Græbe and Breitingner from the Complutensian edition. They are in all the Hebrew MSS., and in the Targ., Syr., Hexaplar Syr., and Vulg.

- 1 IN the ninth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army
- 2 came against Jerusalem, and besieged it. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth of the
- 3 month, a breach was made in the city. And all the princes of the king of Babylon entered, and sat in the middle gate—Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, chief of the eunuchs, Nergal-sharezer, chief of the Magi, and all the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon.
- 4 And it came to pass, when Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and all the military saw them, they fled, and went out by night from the city, in the direction of the king's garden, by the gate between the walls; and they went out in the direction

1. Though Nebuchadnezzar was present when his army first laid siege to Jerusalem, yet, as we have seen, he afterwards fixed his quarters at Riblah. See ver. 17 of the preceding chapter and ver. 5 of the present.

2. The siege continued about a year and a half, not reckoning the short time during which the Chaldeans broke up to give battle to the army of Pharaoh.

3. Jerusalem consisted anciently of an upper and a lower city: the former, comprehending Mount Zion with a strong fortress, occupied the most elevated ground; the latter, to the north of it, was considerably lower, and being more accessible to the Chaldeans, they made a breach in it, and entering, took up their position opposite the gate of the wall which ran up between the two divisions. By *הִתְחַבֵּר*, *the middle*, we are to understand this wall, which formed a kind of breast-work to Mount Zion. I consider all the names here specified to be nomina propria except *רב־סריס*, *Rab-saris*, and *רב־מג*, *Rab-mag*, the former of which denotes *the chief of the eunuchs*, and the latter

*the chief of the Magi*. *מַג*, Persic, *مَج*, *Mog*, *Magus*, great, powerful. The Magi were originally a sacerdotal caste among the Medes, renowned for their learning and influence, and the chief supporters of the Zoroastrian religion. They gradually found their way into other countries; and, at the time of our prophet, had established themselves at the court of Babylon, where, from their knowledge of astronomy, they practised the arts of astrology. It was, no doubt, with a view to obtain from their knowledge of this science the issue of his expedition, that Nebuchadnezzar had brought along with him their chief, who, from his high rank, took his place among the princes or generals of the army.

4. If the king and those who defended the upper city had only had a sufficient supply of provisions, they might have held out for a considerable time against the Chaldeans, but having no hope of successful resistance in the circumstances in which they were placed, they took to flight by the double wall which ran

- 5 of the plain. And the army of the Chaldeans pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the steppes of Jericho, and they took him, and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he pronounced judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes; the king of Babylon slew also all the nobles of Judah. And he dug out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of copper to bring him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the house of the king, and the houses of the people with fire; and they demolished the walls of Jerusalem.
- 9 And the rest of the people who remained in the city, and those who had gone over to him, and the rest of the people who remained, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, carried away captive to Babylon. But Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, left of the poor of the people, who had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields on that day.
- 11 Now Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, gave Jeremiah in charge to Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, saying, Take him, and set thine eyes upon him, and do him no harm; but do to him as he shall say to thee. Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, and Nebushazban, chief of the eunuchs, and Nergal-sharezer, chief of the Magi, and all the princes of the king of Babylon, sent

along the south side of Zion, and reached the point whence two roads struck off, the one to Bethlehem, and the other across the south side of the Mount of Olives. They appear to have taken the latter route in order to reach the Jordan, having crossed which, they might have escaped into Arabia Deserta.

5. *Riblah*, an ancient and celebrated city on the northern boundary of Palestine, in the country of Hamath, the ruins of which are found in the present Riblah, thirty or forty miles south of Hamath, on the Orontes.

6, 7. The punishment of Zedekiah was doubly cruel; first, his being made to witness the execution of his own sons, and then his being deprived of sight

by having his eyes dug out, a mode of punishment not unusual in the East. עָרַר, from עָרַר, *to excavate, dig, dig out*. Michaelis and Scholz think he was deprived of sight by having a red-hot iron held before his eyes. To his being carried as a blind captive to Babylon, reference is made Ezek. xii. 13. לְבִיָּא לְרִיבְיָא

11, 12. It is most probable that some of the Jews who had gone over to the Chaldeans had informed them of the efforts made by Jeremiah to induce Zedekiah to submit, which will account for the instructions here given to treat him with kindness.

14. It cannot exactly be determined what we are to understand by עָרַר, but

and took Jeremiah from the court of the guard, and committed him to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he might bring him out to the house : so he dwelt among the people.

- 15 Now the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying,  
 16 Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Cushite, saying,  
 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel :  
 Behold, I will bring my words upon this city :  
 For calamity, and not for good ;  
 They shall even take effect before thee in that day.  
 17 I will deliver thee in that day, saith Jehovah ;  
 And thou shalt not be given up  
 Into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid.  
 18 For I will certainly rescue thee,  
 And thou shalt not fall by the sword ;  
 But thou shalt have thy life for a prey,  
 Because thou hast trusted in me,  
 Saith Jehovah.

it may be here used of that which, by way of eminence, is frequently called *the house*, namely, the royal palace. To this Jeremiah was immediately removed

as an asylum, where, till the city was completely taken, he remained among those who had taken refuge in the same place.

## CHAPTER XL.

This chapter contains an account of the release of Jeremiah at Ramah, 1; his having it placed at his option whether to accompany the court of Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, or remain in the land of Judah,—which latter he preferred, 2—6; the peaceable settlement of those Jews who remained in the land, under Gedaliah, 7—12, and a warning given to Gedaliah of an attempt against his life by Ishmael.

- 1 The word which was communicated to Jeremiah from Jehovah, after Nebuzaradan the captain of the body-guard had sent him away from Ramah,—having taken him, bound with

1. As, contrary to the usual style of the book, no oracle or prophecy, but purely historical matter, follows the introductory words of this chapter, Howland proposes to cancel them; but they are to be regarded as anticipative of the com-

munication, chap. xlii. 7—22. Previous to the delivery of this communication, the prophet relates the circumstances which were consequent upon the destruction of Jerusalem.

Between what is here stated relative

- manacles among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, who were carried away captive to Babylon.
- 2 And the captain of the body-guard took Jeremiah, and said to him, Jehovah thy God threatened this calamity in reference to this place; and Jehovah hath brought it, and done according as he said: because ye have sinned against Jehovah, and have
- 3 not obeyed his voice, this thing hath happened to you. And now I have released thee this day from the manacles which were on thy hands: if it appear good to thee to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will take care of thee; but if it appear evil to thee to come with me to Babylon, forbear; see, all the land is before thee, where it appears good and
- 4 proper for thee to go, thither go. And before he made any reply, Return, he said, to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath appointed over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people, or go whithersoever it appears good to thee to go; so the captain of the body-guard gave him provision for the way,
- 5 and a present, and sent him away. And Jeremiah came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.
- 6 Now when all the captains of the forces who were in the field, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam over the land, and had given him charge of men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of those who were not carried away
- 7 captive to Babylon; then there came also to Gedaliah to Mizpah, Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and

to Jeremiah, and the statement given in the preceding chapter, there is no real discrepancy. Though immediately released from confinement on the enemy's gaining possession of the royal palace, it would appear that, in the confusion which afterwards took place on the burning of the city, he was lost in the crowd, and led away in chains with the other captives. On reaching Ramah he was discovered by the captain of the body-guard, and again set at liberty.

3. The Keri properly supplies the Article before וַיָּקֵץ.

5. From the signs of hesitation which Jeremiah manifested, the captain concluded that he would rather remain in the land than go to Babylon, and not only sent him to Gedaliah, but provided him with victuals for his journey, and dismissed him with a present.

6. There were two towns of the name of Mizpah, one in Gilcad beyond Jordan, Judges x. 17; xi. 11, 34; and the other in Benjamin, about two hours' journey to the N. W. of Jerusalem. That the latter is here intended, see chap. xli.

8. וַיִּקְרָא is not found in two MSS., nor

- Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.
- 9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, sware to them, and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans; remain in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. And I, behold, I reside at Mizpah, to wait upon the Chaldeans who may come to us; and, as for you, gather wine and summer-fruits and oil, and put them into your vessels, and dwell in your cities which
- 10 you have taken. And all the Jews also who were in Moab, and among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and those who were in all the countries, when they heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had appointed over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of
- 11 Shaphan, even all the Jews returned from all the places whither they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah to Mizpah, and collected wine and summer-fruit in great abundance.
- 12 And Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who were in the field, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah,
- 13 and said to him, Art thou at all aware that Baalis, the king of the children of Ammon, hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam
- 14 did not believe them. Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I beseech thee, and slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it: why should he slay thee, and all the Jews
- 15 who are collected to thee be scattered, and the remnant of Judah perish? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing, for thou speakest falsely respecting Ishmael.

originally in four more, and is omitted in the LXX. Instead of  $\text{כ}^{\text{כ}}$ , twenty-two MSS., eight originally, and perhaps one more, read  $\text{כ}^{\text{ל}}$ , which is also the reading of the LXX. Arab. and Targ. For  $\text{כ}^{\text{ל}}$  the Keri has  $\text{כ}^{\text{ל}}$ .

10.  $\text{לְקַבֵּץ לֵבָנִים וְשִׁמְרִים}$ , *to stand before the Chaldeans*, means here to receive them,

transact business with them, and render them any assistance they might require.

11, 12. The Jews who lived in the country, and had not been able to raise the contributions laid upon them by the Chaldean army, had fled into the neighbouring countries.



## CHAPTER XLI.

Ishmael carries his murderous plot into execution, and kills likewise the Jews and Chaldeans who were with the governor, 1—3; deceitfully murders eighty pilgrims, who were on their way to Jerusalem, 4—9; and attempts to escape with captives and booty to the country of the Ammonites; but, having been pursued by Johanan, he was able to carry only eight with him across the Jordan, 10—15. After this, Johanan, afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldeans, attempts to flee into Egypt, 16—18.

- 1 AND it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishamah, of the seed royal, and the magnates of the king, and ten men with him, came to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, to Mizpah; and they ate bread  
2 together there in Mizpah. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah rose, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, and put him to death, whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land. And Ishmael slew also all the Jews who  
3 were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans, the military, who were found there. And it came to pass, on the second  
4 day after Gedaliah had been put to death, and no man knew it, that there came eighty men from Shechem, from Shilo, and  
5 from Samaria, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having inflicted wounds upon themselves, carrying oblations and frankincense, to bring them to the house of  
6 Jehovah. And Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, went out from Mizpah to meet them, going slowly and weeping; and it came to pass when he fell in with them, he said to them,

1. Ishmael and the other Jews here referred to, had escaped at the taking of Jerusalem three months before, chap. XXXIX. 2, and found refuge at the Ammonitish court.

3. The words, *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁחָט*, limited the persons that were slain to the military; the rest, among whom, doubtless, was our prophet, were carried away captive. See verses 10, 16.

5. The persons here spoken of belonged to the remainder of the ten tribes, afterward known by the name of Samaritans, but who had retained their veneration for the God of their fathers,

and probably were in the habit of repairing at stated seasons to Jerusalem. The plight in which they now appeared was indicative of deep mourning on account of the destruction of that city. Though the temple had been demolished, there can be little doubt, that those priests who had not been carried away by the Chaldeans would, with the permission of Gedaliah, have raised altars among the ruins, at which the offerings of any remaining worshippers might be presented. On this account the sacred place might still be called "the house of the Lord."

- 7 Come in to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam. And it came to pass when they had come into the midst of the city, that Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, butchered them (and threw them) into the midst of the cistern, he and the men who  
 8 were with him. But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael, Do not put us to death, for we have provisions hid in the field, wheat, and barley, and oil, and honey; and he forbore, and did not put them to death among their  
 9 brethren. Now the cistern into which Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, belonging to Gedaliah, was that which Asa the king had made on account of Baasha, king of Israel: Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah,  
 10 filled it with the slain. And Ishmael carried away captive all the rest of the people who were at Mizpah, the daughters of the king, and all the people that remained at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, had given in charge to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam; even Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, carried them away captive, and set out to cross over to the children of Ammon.
- 11 But when Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces whom he had with him, heard all the wickedness which Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, had committed,  
 12 they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, and they found him by the great waters that  
 13 are in Gibeon. And it came to pass when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all

7. There is nothing in the Hebrew text corresponding to the words *and threw them*, which, after the example of most translators, I have supplied, on the grounds, that ~~he~~ ill accords with the verb וַיַּשְׁלֵךְ, and its being expressly stated in the ninth verse, that the dead bodies were cast into the cistern, which clearly implies that they had been slain out of it.

8. It cannot be ascertained whether the men had actually hid the articles mentioned, in the field, in order that they might take them out on their return from Jerusalem, or whether they merely pretended to have done it in order that Ishmael might spare their lives. Under existing circumstances, it

might have been of importance to both parties to secure a supply of provisions: It was customary for the peasants to conceal their grain in such natural or artificial cavities underground, as were sufficiently dry for the purpose.

9. The reason why Asa caused this cistern to be constructed was, that when the city should be besieged by the king of Israel, there might be a sufficient supply of water for the inhabitants. See 1 Kings xv. 22.

12. It is generally allowed that the site of Gibeon, one of the sacerdotal cities of Benjamin, is still to be found in the village of El-Jib, about four miles north-west of Jerusalem. The גִּבְעֹן גִּבְעֹן,

- the captains of the forces who were with him, that they rejoiced. And all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah came round, and turned, and went to Johanan, the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped, with eight men, from Johanan, and went to the children of Ammon.
- Then took Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, all the rest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after he had slain Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, mighty military men, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs whom he had brought back from Gibcon: and they went and stopped at Geruth-Chimham, which is close by Bethlehem, in order to proceed into Egypt, on account of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, had slain Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land.

*great waters*, were in all probability the large fountains described by Dr. Robinson (vol. ii. p. 136), the lower of which may be about 120 feet in length, by 100 in breadth. Comp. 2 Sam. ii. 13, where we read of the pool of Gibcon.

16. As the military who were at Mizpah are stated, ver. 3, to have been killed by Ishmael, those here spoken of

must have been such as had hid themselves, and afterwards surrendered to him, and whom, for this reason, he had spared.

17. *Geruth-Chimham* is supposed to have been a caravanserai belonging to Chimham, close by Bethlehem. *גֵּרֻת* properly signifies a lodging-place or habitation.

## CHAPTER XLII.

The Jews, afraid that the Chaldeans would revenge the death of the Governor, request Jeremiah to obtain for them a Divine decision whether they should remain in the land or flee into Egypt, 1—6. This the prophet communicates to them, to the effect that they should remain, 7—18; but their determination to go into Egypt being known to Omniscience, their miserable fate there is expressly predicted, 19—22.

- 1 And all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people,  
2 from the least to the greatest, drew near and said to Jeremiah the prophet, Let now our supplication be humbly presented

2, 3. Some few authorities read *אֱלֹהֵינוּ*, most probably by emendation, to bring our God, instead of *אֱלֹהֶינוּ*, thy God, but the language into accordance with that

- before thee, and pray on our behalf to Jehovah thy God, even on behalf of all this remnant; for we are left few of many, as
- 3 thine eyes behold us: that Jehovah thy God may show us the way in which we should walk, and the thing that we should do.
- 4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, I have heard you, behold! I will pray to Jehovah your God according to your words; and it shall be that whatsoever Jehovah shall answer you, I will show you, I will withhold nothing from you.
- 5 Then they said to Jeremiah, Jehovah be a true and faithful witness between us, that we will certainly do according to every thing for which Jehovah thy God hath sent thee to us.
- 6 Whether it be pleasant or whether it be unpleasant, we will obey the voice of Jehovah our God to whom we send thee; in order that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of Jehovah our God.
- 7 And it came to pass at the end of ten days that the word of
- 8 Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah. And he called Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, and all the people, from the least to the
- 9 greatest, and said to them, Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel to whom ye sent me humbly to present your supplication before him, If ye will continue to dwell in this land,
- 10 then I will build you up, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I repent of the calamity which I have inflicted upon you. Be not afraid of the
- 11 king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith Jehovah, for I am with you to save you, and to
- 12 deliver you out of his hand. And I will excite pity for you,
- 13 and he will pity you, and restore you to your own land. But

of verses 6 and 20. As יהוה occurs again ver. 5, where there is no variety of reading, there is every reason to believe that the Jews did employ this form, expressing thereby their belief in the peculiar relation in which Jeremiah stood to Jehovah as his accredited prophet; though, after he had spoken of him as their God, ver. 4, they acknowledge him as such, ver. 6.

6. For יהוה a vast number of MSS. and some printed editions read יהוה, the more common form of the pronoun, which the Keri also prescribes.

7. God was pleased to delay his answer ten days, to afford an opportunity to the people of discovering the sincerity or insincerity of the profession which they had made. Comp. Deut. viii. 2.

10. יהוה is an irregular form of the infinitive absolute יהוה, which occurs without the Vau, 1 Sam. xx. 5; the Yod being rejected by aphæresis, on account of the hastening onward of the voice to reach the tone-syllable at the end of the word. Nordheimer, § 76.

12. An unnecessary difficulty has been

- if ye say, We will not return to this land, not obeying the  
 14 voice of Jehovah your God : saying, No, but we will go into  
 the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, and hear no  
 sound of a trumpet, and have no famine of bread, and there  
 15 we will dwell. Now, therefore, hear ye the word of Jehovah,  
 O remnant of Judah ! Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God  
 of Israel, If ye indeed set your faces to go into Egypt, and  
 16 ye go to dwell there, then the sword, of which ye are afraid,  
 shall overtake you there, in the land of Egypt ; and the  
 famine of which ye are apprehensive shall closely follow you  
 17 into Egypt, and there ye shall die. Yea, all the men who  
 set their faces to go into Egypt, to dwell there, shall die by  
 the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence ; and  
 there shall not be to them one left, or that escapeth from  
 18 the calamity which I will bring upon them. For thus saith  
 Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, As my anger and my  
 fury have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem,  
 so shall my fury be poured out upon you when ye go into  
 Egypt ; and ye shall become an execration, and an astonish-  
 ment, and a curse, and a reproach, and ye shall see this  
 19 place no more. Jehovah hath spoken to you, O remnant of  
 Judah ! Go not into Egypt : know for a certainty, that I  
 20 have solemnly warned you this day. Surely ye err against  
 your own souls ; for ye sent me to Jehovah your God,  
 saying, Pray on our behalf to Jehovah our God ; and ac-  
 cording to all that Jehovah our God shall say, so declare it  
 21 to us, and we will do it. Now I have declared it to you  
 this day ; yet ye will obey not the voice of Jehovah your  
 God, nor listen to anything for which he hath sent me to  
 22 you. But now know of a certainty, that ye shall die by the  
 sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place  
 whither ye are bent on going to sojourn.

derived from the use of שׁוּב in the sense of causing to return, or restoring ; all that is intended being that Nebuchadnezzar would permit them peaceably to return to and enjoy their possessions which they had left to flee into Egypt. Verbs in Hiphil are frequently permissive as well

as causative. The LXX., Vulg., Syr., Michaelis, Blayney, Hitzig, and Ewald read in the Hiphil of שׁוּב ; the three first as שׁוּב, the first person of the future.

20. שׁוּב is sometimes used intransitively in Hiphil, as Prov. x. 17. For שׁוּב the Keri has שׁוּב.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

The Jews, in opposition to the express declaration of the Divine will, proceed to Egypt, and take Jeremiah and Baruch along with them, 1—7. By an appropriate symbolical action, the prophet, after his arrival in that country, foreshows its conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, when the fugitives should fare no better than their guilty brethren had done at the conquest of Jerusalem, 8—13.

- 1 AND it came to pass when Jeremiah had finished speaking to all the people all the words of Jehovah their God, with which Jehovah their God had sent him to them, even all
- 2 these words, that Azariah, the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spake to Jeremiah, saying, 'Thou speakest falsely; Jehovah our God hath not sent thee to say, Ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there. But Baruch, the son of Neriah, hath incited thee against us, in order to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, to put us
- 4 to death, or to carry us away captive to Babylon. Thus Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of Jehovah to remain in the land of Judah. But Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah,
- 6 —the men, and the women, and the children, and the daughters of the king, and every soul that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch, the son of Neriah. And they came into the land of Egypt; for they did not obey the voice of Jehovah, but came to Tahpanhes.
- 8 Then the word of Jehovah was communicated to Jeremiah in
- 9 Tahpanhes, saying, Take in thy hand large stones, and hide them in the mortar in the brick-kiln which is at the entrance

7. For Tahpanhes, see on chap. ii. 14—16.

8—10. Regarding it as absurd to suppose that there could be such an object as a brick-kiln at the gate of a royal palace, Eichhorn supposes what is so rendered to have been some cornice,

or projecting part of the building, and to be so called because it was constructed of tiles or brickwork: but it is more likely, from the reference made to the mortar or cement, that the palace was in the course of being built, or was undergoing repairs at the time. Indeed,

- of the house of Pharaoh in Tahpanhes, in the sight of  
 10 the Jews, and say to them, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
 the God of Israel, Behold ! I will send and take Nebuchad-  
 nezzer, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will place his  
 throne on these stones which I have hid, and he shall spread  
 11 out his tapestry over them. And he shall come and smite  
 the land of Egypt : he that is for death shall be for death,  
 and he that is for captivity for captivity, and he that is for  
 12 the sword for the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the  
 temples of the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them, and  
 carry them away captive ; and he shall wrap up the land of  
 Egypt as a shepherd wrappeth up his garment, and shall de-  
 13 part thence in peace. And he shall break in pieces the obe-  
 lisks of the temple of the sun, which is in the land of Egypt ;  
 and the temples of the gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire.

on any other supposition we cannot conceive how the prophet could have deposited the stones as he did. Though these are said to have been great, it is only as contrasted with small ones, which might easily be removed. That they could not have been of an enormous size, is evident : otherwise, though covered over with cement, they must have attracted the notice of the workmen, who would have effected their removal. It is not necessary, however, to suppose that they were to remain till the arrival of Nebuchadnezzar, since all that is meant by his placing his throne over them, &c., may be his taking possession of the palace, in contiguity with which they were placed. It was the act of placing them there by the prophet, that was to symbolize the act of the Chaldean monarch. By רָפָה is meant the rich tapestry or canopy which hung round the throne from above, for the sake of ornament. The word is derived from רָפָה, to be *polished, shining, beautiful*. The Keri proposes רָפָה as the proper

form, which is indeed that in which nouns with the third radical geminated most frequently appear. Comp. רָפָה, Prov. xxvii. 15.

12. Egypt was full of temples and idol-gods, some of wood and other inferior materials, and some of gold : the former, the conquering army would commit to the flames ; the latter, they would carry home to Babylon.

13. בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ רָבָה, *Bethshemesh*, the house or temple of the sun, Gr. Ἡλιουπόλις, *Heliopolis*, an ancient city of Egypt, elsewhere called Ἡὸν, *On*. It was situated on the eastern side of the Nile, a few miles north of Memphis, and was celebrated for its temple of the sun, its splendid festivals, and its learned priesthood, who occupied a spacious building specially appropriated to their use. Its ruins are still visible, the only remaining obelisk, covered with hieroglyphics, is from sixty to seventy feet high. See Kitto's *Cyclopedia*, Art. *On*; and my Comment. on Isaiah xix. 18.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

Jeremiah reproves the Jews in Egypt for persisting in idolatrous practices, 1—14; they remonstrate with him on the subject, 15—19; on which he denounces the judgments of God against them, and the land to which they had fled for refuge, 20—30.

- 1 THE word which was communicated to Jeremiah respecting all the Jews who dwelt in the land of Egypt, who dwelt at Migdol, and in Tahpanhes, and in Noph, and in the land of Pathros, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Ye have seen all the calamity which I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and behold! they are desolate this day, and there is no inhabitant in them. Because of their wickedness which they committed, provoking me to anger, by going to burn incense, serving other gods, which they knew not, they, ye, nor your fathers. And I sent to you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending, saying, Do not, I beseech you, this abominable thing which I hate. But they did not listen, neither did they incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, by not burning incense to other gods. Therefore my fury and mine anger were poured out, and hath burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they are become desolate and waste, as at this day.
- 7 Therefore now, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel, Why do ye commit great wickedness against yourselves, to cut you off, man and woman, child and suckling from the midst of Judah, not leaving you a remnant; by provoking me by the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye are gone to sojourn, in order that ye may be cut off, and in order that ye may become a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wicked deeds

1. <sup>מִגְדּוֹל</sup>, *Migdol*, Egypt. <sup>תַּחְפַּנְחֶס</sup>, a city on the eastern frontier of Egypt, in the direction of the Red Sea. Exod. xiv. 2; Numb. xxxiii. 7. For Tahpanhes

and Noph, see my Comment. on chap. ii. 14—16. For Memphis, on Is. xix. 13. And for Pathros, on Is. xi. 11.

9. For <sup>רָעָה</sup>, *their vices*, the LXX. read <sup>τὰς ἀρχαίους ἡμῶν</sup>, which Blayney



- of your fathers, and the wicked deeds of the kings of Judah, and the wicked deeds of their wives, and your own wicked deeds, and the wicked deeds of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? They have not been contrite even to this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, and in my statutes, which I set before you, and before your fathers.
- Wherefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold! I will set my face against you for evil, even to cut off the whole of Judah. Yea, I will take the remnant of Judah, who have set their faces to come into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, they shall fall in the land of Egypt by the sword, and by the famine, they shall be consumed, from the least to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and with the famine; and they shall become an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. And I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, and with the famine, and with pestilence.
- And there shall not be one that escapeth, nor one left of the remnant of Judah, that are come to sojourn there in the land of Egypt, to return to the land of Judah, who set their minds on returning to dwell there; for they shall not return, except it be as fugitives.
- Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a large company, and all the people who dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, We will not listen to thee in regard to the word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of Jehovah; but we will certainly do whatever proceedeth out of our own mouth, burning incense

attempts to justify, but the Hebrew word is quite in its place, as the following *נָשֵׁי*, *your wives*, shows. The Jewish queens were great promoters of idolatry, 1 Kings xi. 1—8; xv. 13. The third singular suffix is to be taken collectively and rendered in the plural, as it is in the versions.

11. As it is evident, from verse 28, that

some of the Jews were to return from the land of Egypt, the totality here spoken of must be confined to those who had contumaciously refused to listen to the prophet, and, after they had gone thither, had conformed to the idolatries of the country. The others may have removed thither under different circumstances.

17. See on chap. vii. 18.

to the queen of heaven, and pouring out libations to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, and had plenty of bread, and were happy, and saw no calamity.

15 But from the time that we ceased to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out libations to her, we have been in want of everything, and have been consumed by the sword, and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out libations to her, was it without our husbands that we made for her wafers, serving her and pouring out libations to her?

20 Then Jeremiah spake to all the people, to the men, and to the women, even to all the people, who had replied to him, saying, Was it not the incense which ye offered in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, that Jehovah remembered, and that came into his mind? And Jehovah was no longer able to endure the wickedness of your deeds, the abominations which ye committed, and your land hath become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day.

23 Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against Jehovah, and have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies, therefore hath this calamity happened to you, as at this day. Moreover, Jeremiah said to all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of Jehovah, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled it with your hands, saying, We will certainly perform our vows which we have made to offer incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out libations to her; the women will certainly confirm your vows, and they

26 will certainly perform your vows. Therefore hear the word of Jehovah, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt, Behold! I have sworn by my great name, saith Jehovah, that my name shall no longer be named by the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying: The

- 27 Lord Jehovah liveth ! Behold, I will act vigilantly towards them for calamity, and not for good ; and all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed with
- 28 the sword, and with famine, till they be destroyed. And those who escape from the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number, so that all the remnant of Judah that are come into Egypt to sojourn there
- 29 shall know whose word shall stand, mine or theirs. And this shall be a sign to you, that I will punish you in this place, in order that ye may know that my words respecting you as to calamity shall assuredly be confirmed.
- 30 Thus saith Jehovah, Behold ! I will deliver Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I delivered Zedekiah, king of Judah, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

29, 30. *חֹפְרָא*, *Hophra*, known by the Greeks under the name of Apries, succeeded Psammis, the successor of Pharaoh Necho, who was beaten by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. He was not conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, as some have supposed, simply from the circumstance that the name of that monarch occurs in the verse ; but by a rebel of the name of Amasis, who treated

him well at first, but afterwards gave him up to his enemies, by whom he was strangled. Kitto's Encyclopædia, Art. HOPHRA. As certainly as the king, under whose protection the Jews had placed themselves, should come to this unhappy end, so certainly might they expect to fall into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, who shortly after conquered Egypt.

## CHAPTER XLV.

This brief chapter, in point of time, follows immediately upon chap. xxxvi. How it came to be removed to its present position cannot be determined. Baruch, having been alarmed by the awful denunciations which he had written from the mouth of our prophet, ver. 3, has a message delivered to him from Jehovah, assuring him that though the judgments should certainly be inflicted upon his guilty people, 4, so that it would be vain for him to expect the enjoyment of temporal prosperity, yet he should be preserved in the midst of all the dangers to which he might be exposed, 5. See on chap. xxi. 9.

Chaps. xli.—li. contain predictions relating to the Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Idumæans, Damascenes, Kedarenes, Elamites, and Babylonians. They are composed in the more elevated style of prophetic poetry, and contain many passages equal in sublimity to the prophecies of Isaiah, from which some of them are in part borrowed. In the version of the LXX. they follow immediately after chap. xxv. 13. See on that verse, and the Introductory Dissertation, sect. iv.

- 1 THE word which Jeremiah the prophet spake to Baruch, the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book from the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, concerning thee, O Baruch! Thou hast said, Alas! now for me, for Jehovah hath added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my sighing, and find no repose.
- 2 Thus shalt thou say to him: Thus saith Jehovah, Behold! that which I have built I will pull down, and that which I have planted, I will pluck up: and that with respect to all the land: yet thou seekest great things for thyself? Seek them not; for behold! I will bring calamity upon all flesh, saith Jehovah, but I will grant thee thy life for a prey in all the places whither thou mayest go.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

This chapter contains two distinct prophecies relating to Egypt: the first describes the discomfiture of the Egyptian army under Pharaoh Necho, at Carchemish, by Nebuchadnezzar, 1—12; the second relates to the invasion and conquest of Egypt by the same monarch, 13—26. The chapter concludes with a brief prediction of the preservation of the Jewish people, 27, 28. That the prophet should commence his predictions against the foreign nations by delivering that against Egypt, is most natural, considering that he had just given, in the preceding chapters, an account of his transportation to that country.

- 1 THE word of Jehovah which was communicated to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations, CONCERNING EGYPT, concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates, at Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

1. A general inscription to the collection of prophecies contained in this and the following chapters against the nations. For the peculiarity of the construction *וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם*, see on chap. xiv. 1. Instead of *וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם*, twelve of Kennicott's and as many of De Rossi's MSS., with several of the earlier editions, read

*וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם*, which has probably been copied from chap. xxv. 13.

2. *וְהָיָה לְכָל הָעָם*, CONCERNING EGYPT: the special title to the two following predictions concerning the Egyptians. *נֶחֱכָה*, Necho, one of the most renowned of the Pharaohs, was the sixth king of the twenty-sixth dynasty, the son and successor of Psam-

- 3 Prepare the buckler and the shield,  
And approach for the battle.
- 4 Bind to the horses, and mount the steeds,  
And present yourselves in helmets ;  
Polish the lances, put on the coats of mail.
- 5 Why do I see them terrified ?  
They are turned back, and their heroes are beaten,  
Yea they do nothing but flee, they look not round,  
Fear is on every side,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 6 The swift shall not flee,  
Neither shall the hero escape ;  
In the north,  
By the bank of the river Euphrates,  
They shall stumble, they shall fall.

metichus, and the second of that name. With respect to the name itself, it is doubtless of Egyptian origin, though the Targ. and Syr. render it by ܡܬܝܚܝܬ,

ܡܬܝܚܝܬ, *the lame*—a derivation obtained from the Hebrew phrase נָהַרְוֹלָם, which has this signification. After sitting out a fleet of discovery from the Red Sea along the coast of Africa, which actually doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and returned to Egypt by the Mediterranean, he sent a powerful army through Palestine to check the progress of the Babylonians, whom he defeated at Carchemish on the Euphrates, after having slain Josiah, king of Judah, who rashly attempted to oppose his march. Four years after this triumph over Nebuchadnezzar, he again marched forth against him ; but the Babylonians, being prepared for his approach, completely routed his army at the same place, and he was compelled to return to Egypt, after losing all the territory which had been subject to the Pharaohs to the west of the Euphrates. See 2 Kings xxiv. 7. For ܥܪܚܡܝܫ, *Carchemish*, Cercusium, see my Comment. on Is. x. 9.

3. The prophet ironically summons the Egyptians to the attack, as if they might make sure of victory. The difference between the קָץ and the הַקָּץ, consisted in the former being of a smaller size, and

being suspended on the left arm, whereas the latter was of the largest size, covering the whole body, and was used for the shelter of heavily armed infantry.

4. The horses were partly to be bound to the war-chariots and partly used for the cavalry. That the Egyptians employed war-chariots in ancient times, see Exod. xiv. 7 ; xv. 4. Some suppose the cavalry or horse-troops to be addressed under the name of ܩܝܨܝܡ, but it is more proper to confine the signification to the horses, the word being obviously parallel to ܫܝܬܝܡ in the previous clause of the verse. The ܩܝܨܝܡ, *helmets*, or skull-caps, consisted either of brass or wood, and sometimes of rushes, skins, cloth, or felt. The ܫܝܬܝܡ, *coats of mail*, or cuirasses, were manufactured of brass or iron. The most perfect kind consisted of small circlets or rings of metal, worked into each other, which gave greater flexibility to the coat, and thus left the wearer more at liberty to move his body. In the latter half of the verse the infantry are addressed.

6. Though ܐܝܢ properly expresses prohibition, yet in poetry it is often used with the future to express simple negation. In the bold language of poetry the Egyptians are represented as astounded at the formidable appearance of the Babylonian army. Their most courageous warriors are put to flight, and universal

- 7 Who is this that cometh up as the river,  
Whose waters toss themselves like the floods?
- 8 Egypt cometh up as the river,  
And the waters toss themselves like the floods;  
And he saith, I will go up, I will cover the earth,  
I will destroy cities, and those who inhabit them.
- 9 Mount the horses, let the chariots dash along,  
And let the heroes march out;  
Cush and Put handling the shield,  
And Lydians expert in the use of the bow.
- 10 For this is the day of the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
A day of vengeance to be avenged of his adversaries,  
And the sword shall devour and be satiated,  
And it shall be drunk with their blood;  
For the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,

consternation prevails. So complete is the rout, that neither swiftness nor strength is of any avail.— $\text{נִצָּחַ$ . The  $\text{נ}$  local denotes rest in a place, as well as motion towards it, as  $\text{נִצָּחַ$ , in Babylon, chap. xxix. 15;  $\text{נִצָּחַ$ , in the habitation, Hab. iii. 11; and this same term  $\text{נִצָּחַ$ , chap. i. 13, where see Note.

7, 8. The principal image here is taken from the Nile, which during its inundations overspreads the surface of the country. In like manner the army of Pharaoh overspread the country on the south of the Euphrates.  $\text{נִצָּחַ}$ , originally an Egyptian word, is almost exclusively used of the Nile in the Hebrew Scriptures. As, however, that river only rises gently, the image borrowed from it is exchanged for one taken from other rivers, whose violent rush more aptly sets forth the proud and impetuous advance of an army.  $\text{נָהָר}$ , city, is here, without the article, a collective noun, and is to be rendered in the plural. Thus Rosenmüller, Scholz, Hitzig.

9. A continuation of the irony introduced at verse 3. The native Egyptians never appear to have been distinguished by physical strength, which Michaelis ascribes to the heat of the climate, the absence of laborious exercise, abstinence from the use of animal food, and other causes. Hence they employed mercenaries in their armies, hired from the

different nations with which they came in contact, especially those specified in this verse. Apries had no fewer than thirty thousand Carians and Ionians in his service. For  $\text{נִצָּחַ}$  *Cush*, see my comment on Is. xi. 11.  $\text{נִצָּחַ}$  *Put*, according to Josephus, means Mauritania, in which Pliny places a river of the same name. The mention of the  $\text{נִצָּחַ}$ , *Lydians*, along with this name, sufficiently shows that an African people so called, and not the Lydians of Asia Minor, are intended. The construction  $\text{נִצָּחַ} \text{נִצָּחַ} \text{נִצָּחַ}$  is worthy of notice: lit. *the handlers of the benders of the bow*. The former of the two participial nouns, if used alone with bow, would express the simple idea of archers; but to express the idea more emphatically, the second is also used, which shows the particular manner in which the bow is used, namely by bending it with the foot. Both participles are *ad sensum* in construction with  $\text{נִצָּחַ}$ , and are in apposition with each other. Compare for similar instances of double construction  $\text{נִצָּחַ} \text{נִצָּחַ}$ , Deut. xxxiii. 19.  $\text{נִצָּחַ} \text{נִצָּחַ}$ , Is. xix. 11.

10—12. The complete slaughter of the Egyptian army is represented as a great sacrifice, for which many animals were killed. Compare Is. xxxiv. 6—8. By a bold figure, the sword is represented as feasting on the flesh and blood of those who were slaughtered. For

Hath a sacrifice in the north country,  
By the river Euphrates.

- 11 Go up to Gilead, and take balsam,  
O virgin-daughter of Egypt!  
In vain dost thou multiply medicines,  
There is no cure for thee.
- 12 The nations have heard of thy disgrace,  
And thy cry hath filled the earth;  
For hero stumbleth over hero,  
Both of them are fallen together.
- 13 The word which Jehovah spake to Jeremiah the prophet when  
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to smite the land of  
Egypt.
- 14 Declare ye in Egypt! publish ye in Migdol!  
Yea, publish ye in Noph and say ye in Tahpanhes!  
Present thyself, and get ready,  
For the sword devoureth around thee.
- 15 Why is thy mighty one thrown down?

the balm of Gilead, see on chap. viii. 21, 22. Egypt is called a virgin, because she had never been brought under the power of any foreign monarch. So complete was to be the overthrow, that the loss was never to be retrieved.

13. Whether the prophecy contained in the remaining part of the chapter was delivered at the same time with the preceding, we have no means of ascertaining; but the events in which it received its accomplishment did not take place till sixteen years after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, Ezek. xxix. 17. In the absence of all historical reference to the subject on Egyptian monuments, and likewise in Greek writers, most of whom do not appear to have been acquainted with Nebuchadnezzar, we possess no means of throwing light upon the circumstances connected with the successful expedition of that monarch into Egypt, beyond what we find in the prophetic record. The only time to which we can refer that expedition, is that which was subsequent to his conquest of Tyre in the year B. C. 585. Having spent thirteen years in the siege of that city

and obtained nothing for his pains, the prophet Ezekiel, in the passage above referred to, promises him Egypt as his reward for having destroyed the land-influence of that maritime power, and describes in most glowing language the results of his expedition, chaps. xxx. xxxi. xxxii. Miserably harassed by intestine broils, the country became an easy prey to his army, which, besides destroying it, and taking many of the inhabitants captive, carried away an immense booty.

14. A further instance of the same irony which the prophet had employed, verses 3, 4 and 9. The Egyptians are summoned to stand on their defence.

15, 16. The fruitlessness of military resistance, the complete discomfiture and confusion of the troops, and their flight to their respective countries, are graphically represented. For מִצְרַיִם, *thy mighty ones*, fifty-five MSS., perhaps another, and four more at first hand, the Soncín. and Brixian Editions, the LXX. and Vulg. read מִצְרַיִם, *thy mighty one*, which some interpreters, after the rendering of the LXX. ó ἄπισ ὁ μούσχος ὁ ἐκλεκτός σου,

He standeth not, for Jehovah hath thrust him down.

- 16 Numerous are those who stumble,  
They fall even one against another ;  
And they say : Arise, and let us return to our people,  
And to the land of our nativity,  
From the cruel sword.
- 17 There they announced : Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is destroyed ;  
He hath suffered the season to pass.
- 18 As I live, saith the King,  
Whose name is Jehovah of Hosts,  
As Tabor is among the mountains,  
And as Carmel by the sea, so he cometh.
- 19 Make for thyself vessels for captivity,  
O daughter-inhabitant of Egypt !  
For Noph shall be desolate,  
And laid waste, without an inhabitant.

explain of Apis, the bull to which divine honours were paid at Memphis, where he had a temple. Viewed in this light there is a striking contrast between the weakness of the idol, notwithstanding the power that his worshippers might have ascribed to him, and the true God, who is frequently styled *גִּבּוֹר*, the *mighty one*. What led the LXX. to think of Apis was doubtless the circumstance of the term being applied to bulls, Ps. xxii. 13; 1. 13. Though we have no account of Nebuchadnezzar's having destroyed the sacred bull, this was actually done by Cambyses, king of Persia.

16. *נָפִיז* and *נָפִיזִים* are to be taken as collectives, as the following plural forms clearly show.

17. *There*, in their own countries, they spread the information that Pharaoh was destroyed. Heb. *פָּצוּ*, *destruction* in the abstract. The words *הַמִּצְרַיִם* have been variously interpreted, but the true sense seems to be that Pharaoh, instead of exerting himself to the utmost in recruiting his forces and putting his country in a proper state of defence after the defeat at Charchemish, spent the time in inactivity, and, in consequence, fell an easy prey to the invader.

18, 19. Stark, Rosenmüller, Dahler, and Scholz are of opinion, that it is Pharaoh who is here compared to Tabor and Carmel; but it is more agreeable to the context to refer it to Nebuchadnezzar, whom, though not mentioned, the prophet has in his eye. As these mountains towered high above all the mountains of Palestine, so the king of Babylon had proved, and would still prove himself superior to all other monarchs. Tabor is 1,755 feet, and Carmel 1,500, above the level of the Mediterranean. The latter is particularly distinguished by its forming a bold promontory on the coast. In *נִיזָה* we have the genitive of object, vessels of wood or skin, such as would contain food or other necessities which the captives would require for their journey. From the identity of form between *יִשְׁכָּן בְּחִבְלָה* and *יִשְׁכָּן בְּחִבְלָה*, Zecl. ii. 11, where unquestionably the Jews are meant, it has been thought that those Jews who were resident in Egypt are addressed here: it is more in keeping, however, with the spirit of the passage, to consider the words as directed to the Egyptians. The two former nouns are, therefore, to be taken in apposition, and are simply descriptive of the inhabitants.



- 20 Egypt is a very beautiful heifer,  
Destruction from the north hath entered her.
- 21 Her very mercenaries in the midst of her  
Are like well-fed heifers ;  
Yet even they turn round,  
They flee together, they stand not :  
For the day of their destruction hath come upon them,  
The time of their visitation.
- 22 Her cry proceedeth like a serpent,  
For they march with valour,  
And come against her with axes,  
As hewers of wood.
- 23 They cut down her forest, saith Jehovah,  
Though it is impenetrable ;  
For they are more numerous than the locusts,  
Yea, they are innumerable.
- 24 The daughter of Egypt is confounded,  
She is delivered into the hand of the people of the north.
- 25 Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, saith :  
Behold ! I will punish Ammon of No,  
And Pharaoh, and Egypt,  
And her gods and her kings,  
Both Pharaoh, and those who confide in him ;
- 26 And I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their  
life,  
Even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,

20.  $\text{הַיָּפִיּוֹת}$  is an intensive compound form of  $\text{יָפִי}$ , and should properly be written as one word, as it is exhibited in many of Kennicott and De Rossi's MSS. Comp.  $\text{הַיָּפִיּוֹת}$  Ps. xlv. 3.— $\text{לְהַרְסָהּ}$  *destruction*, for the concrete *destroyer*; from  $\text{רָצַח}$ , *to cut, cut off, destroy*.—If  $\text{אֵל}$  were repeated for the sake of emphasis, the first would occur at the beginning of the sentence. The second  $\text{אֵל}$  is wanting in some MSS., and, instead of it, about one hundred, supported by all the ancient versions, read  $\text{אֵלֶּהָ}$ , *into her*, i.e. Egypt.

22. As a serpent makes the best of its escape, hissing when the tree is felled under which it has been lurking, so

should the Egyptians betake themselves to flight before the Chaldean army.

23.  $\text{נִסְּרוּ}$  is preferable to the imperative  $\text{נִסְּרוּ}$ , which some have proposed to read.

25. For  $\text{אֱמוֹן בְּנוֹת}$  *Ammon of No*, see my Comment. on Nahum iii. 8. The preposition in this case indicates the place where Jupiter Ammon had his celebrated temple. The kings here spoken of were not kings of Egypt, of which country Pharaoh-Necho was at the time sole monarch, but the rulers of those nations which were allied with her.

26. In the time of Cyrus, about forty years after the subjugation of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, that country threw off

And into the hand of his ministers :  
But afterwards it shall be inhabited  
As in ancient days, saith Jehovah.

- 27 But thou, fear thou not, O my servant Jacob !  
Neither be thou dismayed, O Israel !  
For behold ! I will deliver thee from afar,  
And thy seed from the land of their captivity ;  
And Jacob shall return and be tranquil, and at rest,  
And none shall make him afraid.
- 28 Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob !  
Saith Jehovah, for I am with thee ;  
Though I make an end of all nations  
Whither I have driven thee,  
Yet I will not make an end of thee,  
But I will chastise thee as is meet,  
For I cannot leave thee altogether unpunished.

the Babylonian yoke ; but, though it so far recovered, it never regained its former prowess, and has continued to be held in servile subjection by foreign powers until the present day. See Ezek. xxx. 11—15.

29. A repetition almost verbatim of chap. xxx. 11.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

This chapter contains a prophecy relating to the Philistines, whose country was overrun by the army of Nebuchadnezzar during, or immediately after the siege of Tyre, while prosecuting his march towards Egypt.

- 1 THE word of Jehovah which was communicated to Jeremiah the prophet concerning THE PHILISTINES, before Pharaoh had smitten Gaza. Thus saith Jehovah :  
Behold ! waters come up from the north,  
And they are become an overflowing torrent,  
They overflow the land and its fulness,  
The city and its inhabitants ;

1. We have no means of determining on what occasion Pharaoh conquered Gaza. It was, however, probably on his return after obtaining the victory at Charchemish.

- So that men cry out,  
And every inhabitant of the land howleth,  
3 At the sound of the stamping of the hoofs of his mighty  
steeds,  
At the bounding of his chariots,  
The rumbling of his wheels :  
The fathers turn not round to the children  
For feebleness of hands :
- 4 Because of the day that cometh,  
To destroy all the Philistines,  
To cut off every remaining auxiliary  
Of Tyre and Zidon ;  
For Jehovah will destroy the Philistines,  
The remnant of the island of Caphtor.
- 5 Baldness is come on Gaza,  
Ashkelon is destroyed,  
With the rest of their valley :  
How long wilt thou wound thyself ?
- 6 O sword of Jehovah !  
How long wilt thou not be at rest ?  
Retire into thy scabbard ?  
Rest and be still ?
- 7 How canst thou be at rest ?  
For Jehovah hath given it a charge  
Against Ashkelon, and against the sea-coast,  
There he hath appointed it.

4. The Philistines, being the neighbours of the Phœnicians, would naturally make a common cause with them in case of foreign invasion. By *קפּטור*, *Caphtor*, almost all the ancient interpreters understand Cappadocia; Gesenius favours the opinion, that Crete was intended; but Michaelis, Scholz, and Michelson in Kitto, think that the island of Cyprus was meant. Comp. Deut. ii. 23, and Amos ix. 7.

5. The nation of the Philistines is represented as a female who has torn her hair and cut her flesh in token of deep

mourning on account of some awful catastrophe. *קפּטור* is used not only of a valley, but also of a long low plain, such as that occupied by the Philistines along the shore of the Mediterranean, below the mountainous country of Judea on the east.

6, 7. The prophet apostrophizes Nebuchadnezzar as the instrument of Jehovah in punishing the guilty nations in and about Palestine. After addressing the sword in the second person, the prophet, turning to his hearers, speaks of it in the third, ver. 7. No MS. reads *קפּ*.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

## CONCERNING MOAB.

This prophecy is couched in highly poetical language, and some parts of it are rather to be regarded in the light of an amplified edition of Is. xv. xvi. than an original composition of Jeremiah. The hypothesis of Hitzig, that the passages common to the two prophets are interpolations by some person who lived in the times of the Maccabees, is, like many of the positions of that critic, destitute of the least shadow of proof. Equally unsupported is the opinion which others have advanced, that both copied from an earlier writer. That what are called interpolations are really such, cannot be maintained. They are rather to be considered free quotations, more or less complete, as suited the object of our prophet. Sometimes the words are given verbatim, but more frequently the phraseology is either abbreviated or commented on; sometimes a word is exchanged for its synonyme, sometimes a phrase for a corresponding phrase. The extracts are not made in regular succession, but partly from one part of the oracle of Isaiah, and partly from another. The diction bears marks of the deteriorated Hebrew of the age of Jeremiah; yet in some instances there is a decided improvement on the language of the earlier prophet. Some of the discrepancies are attributable to transcription. See the original of both in Gesenius's Isaiah, vol. ii. pp. 511—513, and the judicious remarks of Professor Stuart in the Biblical Repos. vol. vii. pp. 123, 124.

The prophecy was most probably composed on occasion of the part which the Moabites took against the Jews, as auxiliaries to the Chaldeans in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 2; and its fulfilment is to be referred to their subjugation by the same monarch on his way to Egypt, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem. See Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, book x. chap. 9, § 7. The oracle commences with the conquest of Moab, and the universal lamentation which it occasioned, 1—5. The removal of Chemosh, the chief god of the country, and the completeness of the destruction, are next set forth, 6—10. The prophet then shows, that notwithstanding the proud spirit of the Moabites, engendered by their unvaried prosperity, they should assuredly be conquered, 11—17; and, lest any of the cities should cherish the hope of escape, an enumeration of the principal cities that were to suffer is specially given, 18—25. Then follows an exposure of the proud exultation in which they indulged at the calamities of the Jews, 26—30. The rest of the chapter is made up of mingled predictions of the universal devastation which was to ensue, and the deep lamentation which it would naturally produce, 31—46. The whole concludes with a gracious promise of future prosperity, 47.

The travellers Seetzen, Burckhardt, Irby, Mangles, Banks, Legh, Buckingham, and Robinson, have thrown much light on the geography of the region formerly occupied by the Moabites: many of the ruins bear the ancient names which occur in Scripture.

1

## CONCERNING MOAB.

THUS saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
Alas! for Nebo, for it is laid waste,  
Kiriathaim is put to shame, it is taken;  
Misgab is put to shame and confounded.

- 2 The glorying of Moab in Heshbon is no more,  
They have devised calamity against her;  
"Come and let us cut her off from being a nation;"  
Thou also, O Madmen, shalt be destroyed;  
The sword shall follow thee.
- 3 The sound of a shriek from Horonaim,  
Devastation and great destruction.
- 4 Moab is destroyed;  
Her little ones cause a shriek to be heard.
- 5 Surely in the ascent of Luhith,  
Weeping ariseth upon weeping;

1. *Nebo*, see on Is. xv. 2. כִּרְיָתַיִם, *Kiriathaim* (double town), a place of great antiquity, originally possessed by the Emin, Gen. xiv. 5, and afterwards at two different times by the Moabites. It is placed by Eusebius ten miles west of Medebah. מִסְגַּב, *Misgab*, occurs only here as a proper name, which, as derived from מִסְגַּב, *to be high*, indicates that it occupied an elevated position. How the LXX. got, and what they understood by, Ἀγάθ καὶ Ἀγάθ, it is impossible to say.

2. הֶשְׁבֹּן, *Heshbon*, an ancient and royal city, nearly midway between the rivers Jabbok and Arnon, called by Eusebius and Jerome *Eshus*, now *Heshan*, the ruins of which cover the sides of an elevated hill, which commands an extensive view of the surrounding country. From its having been the object of glorying on the part of the Moabites, it must have been one of their chief cities, and doubtless was strongly fortified. Comp. Numb. xxi. 25—30, most of which passage is highly poetic, and part of which is copied by our prophet, vers. 45, 46. On the arrival of the Hebrews from Egypt, it was the royal residence of Sihon, king of the Amorites.—Observe the paronomasia in הֶשְׁבֹּן—הֶשְׁבֹּן. Though the words are separated by the division which I have adopted, it little, if at all, affects

the paronomasia. The common division represents Heshbon as the place where the plan was laid for the conquest of the country, which is less suitable.—In כִּרְיָתַיִם is a slight paronomasia. Of the city called *Madmen* we have no further account. If we may infer from the signification of its name (*dunghill*, from דִּמְעָן), it must have occupied a low situation.

3—5. There is no reason why, with three MSS., we should change צִוְרִיָּה, *her little ones*, into צִוְרִיָּה, LXX. εἰς Ζογόρα, *to Zoar*, to make the text agree with יְצִי צֵי, Is. xv. 5. The children are beautifully introduced as augmenting the melancholy and distressing scene by their pitiable shrieks. צִוְרִיָּה, which is found in many MSS., and the Sonc. and Brix. editions, is only a different form of the same word.—צִוְרִיָּה is an instance of the construct for the absolute צִוְרִיָּה.—הֶרֶן, *Horonaim*, which signifies the double caves, is only referred to besides, in Neh. ii. 10; Is. xv. 5; ver. 34 of the present chapter, and Josephus, Antiq. xiii. 15, § 4, where, among other cities of Moab, he mentions Ὀπάνας. הָרָךְ, *way*, used by Isaiah, is here changed into the more definite מִדְּרָגָה, *descent*, indicating that it lay low in comparison of לִוְיָתָן, *Luhith*, which is represented as being high in position. In מִסְגַּב—יְצִי is a

- Surely in the descent of Horonaim,  
The enemies hear the cry of destruction.
- 6 Flee, rescue your life;  
And be as the juniper in the desert.
- 7 Surely because thy confidence was  
In thy works and in thy treasures,  
Thou also shalt be taken;  
And Chemosh shall go into captivity,  
His priests and his princes together.
- 8 And the destroyer shall come to every city,  
And no city shall escape;  
The valley also shall be ruined,  
And the plain shall be destroyed;  
As Jehovah hath spoken.
- 9 Give wings to Moab,  
That flying she may depart,  
And her cities become desolate,  
Without an inhabitant in them.
- 10 Cursed be he that doeth the work of Jehovah deceitfully,  
And cursed be he that withholdeth his sword from blood.
- 11 Moab hath been secure from his youth,  
And he hath settled on his lees;

beautiful paronomasia. Instead of  $\text{קִי}$ , *weeping*, we have  $\text{יָד}$  in Isaiah. How the former should be far more difficult than the latter, and how it could hardly have originated with Jeremiah, Gesenius does not inform us.

6. For  $\text{פָּרַח}$  see on chap. xvii. 6. The LXX., who render the word in that passage by *δυναμώματα*, translate here *σὸς δυνάμεις*.

7. By the  $\text{מְעַשֵׂי}$ , *works* of the Moabites, I understand their fortifications. In this construction of the term I find I have been anticipated by the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. They must either signify these, or their idolatrous deeds zealously performed in honour of Chemosh, mentioned immediately after.  $\text{כִּמְשׁוֹשׁ}$ , *Chemosh*, the national deity of the Moabites and Ammonites, supposed by Jerome to have been Baal-Peor. According to Jewish tradition he was worshipped under the symbol of a black

star, which would seem to countenance the opinion that he corresponded to Saturn. Comp. Numb. xxi. 29; Judg. xi. 24; 1 Kings xi. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. When idolaters were vanquished they always took care, if possible, to carry their gods with them on their flight.

9.  $\text{מָחַד מָחַד}$ — $\text{יָד}$  form a paronomasia.  $\text{מָחַד}$  stands for  $\text{יָד}$  on account of the following verb.

10. To give the greater force to the representation of the completeness of Moab's destruction, a curse is pronounced against the Chaldeans if they did not faithfully and zealously execute the commission which Jehovah had given them.

11. The Moabites, never having been removed by any enemy from their native soil, retained all their national pride, and possessed great riches and strength. Strikingly to set forth this state of prosperity, the prophet employs a metaphor

- He hath not been poured from vessel to vessel,  
Neither hath he gone into captivity:  
Therefore his flavour remaineth in him,  
And his scent is unchanged.
- 12 Therefore, behold! the days come, saith Jehovah,  
When I will send to him overturners,  
Who shall overturn him,  
They shall empty his vessels,  
And break their bottles in pieces.
- 13 Then shall Moab be ashamed of Chemosh,  
As the house of Israel were ashamed of Bethel,  
The object of their confidence.
- 14 How can ye say, We are heroes,  
And men of power for war?
- 15 Moab is destroyed, and her cities are gone up,  
The choice of his youth are gone down to the slaughter,  
Saith the King, Jehovah of Hosts is his name.
- 16 The disaster of Moab cometh soon,  
And his calamity hasteth apace.
- 17 Bewail him all ye who are around him,  
And let all who know his name say:  
How is the strong sceptre broken!  
The beautiful staff!
- 18 Come down from glory, and sit in misery,

taken from the treatment of wine, which, after its fermentation, is left for a time on its lees, in order to preserve its strength and flavour. To render it fit for use, it is then filtered or drawn from one vessel into another. See on Is. xxv. 6.

12. *יָפְצוּ* signifies *to turn on one side*, or incline a vessel in order to empty it of its contents. Arab. *سعى*, *inclinator* *fail*. Conjug. iv. *Effecit ut inclinaretur vas*. The verb *overturn* does not quite express the idea, but it is the best I can find.

13. Chemosh should no more be able to defend the Moabites, than the golden calf set up by Jeroboam had been to protect the Israelites.

15. There is a marked antithesis be-

tween *יָפְצוּ* and *רָצוּ*. The only construction that can be put upon the former verb, is that of the cities going up in smoke, when set on fire by the enemy. Comp. Josh. viii. 20, 21; Judges xx. 40. When this took place, the young warriors would rapidly come down from their burning fortresses, but only to be slain by the foe.

16. As this prophecy was delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and Nebuchadnezzar invaded the neighbouring countries five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, about twenty-three years must have elapsed between the two events: yet, in prophetic vision, Jeremiah sees the fall of Moab as near at hand.

18. *יִדְבֹן*, *Keri יִדְבִי*. For *Dibon*, see on Is. xv. 2. Being plentifully supplied with water, Is. xv. 9, its inhabitants are

- O inhabitress, daughter of Dibon !  
 For the destroyer of Moab cometh up to thee,  
 He shall destroy thy fortresses.
- 19 Stand by the way, and look out,  
 O inhabitress of Aroer !  
 Ask the fugitive and the escaped,  
 Say : what hath happened ?
- 20 Moab is ashamed, because he is broken down ;  
 Howl and cry out ;  
 Proclaim it at Arnon,  
 That Moab is destroyed.
- 21 Judgment is also come on the champain country,  
 On Holon, and on Jachza, and on Mephaath.
- 22 And on Dibon, and on Nebo, and on Beth-Diblathaim,  
 23 And on Kiriathaim, and on Beth-gamul, and on Beth-meon.
- 24 And on Kerijoth, and on Bozrah ;  
 And on all the cities of the land of Moab,  
 Those that are distant and those that are near.
- 25 The horn of Moab is hewn down,  
 And his arm is broken,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 26 Make him drunk,  
 For he hath magnified himself against Jehovah.  
 So that Moab may wallow in his vomit,  
 And become the veriest object of derision.

summoned to come down into the arid region of Arabia Deserta, to which they should be obliged to flee. *אָרֹעַ* means here a dry and thirsty land.

19. *אָרֹעַ*, *Aroer*, was situated on the northern bank of the Arnon, where, on the edge of a precipice, Burckhardt fell in with its ruins. As it lay in the way of the Moabites who fled into the desert, its inhabitants are represented as inquiring, what was the occasion of their flight.

20—24. To present the complete destruction of the country more vividly to the view, a graphic enumeration is given of its cities, respecting which little or nothing is known, further than that some of them were cities of the Levites, when

the country was in the possession of the Hebrews. *בֹּזְרָה*, the *Bozrah* here mentioned, is different from that occurring Is. xxxiv. 6, which was situated in the country of Idumæa. That it was the city of the same name in the Hauran is highly improbable. See on Is. xxxiv. 6.

26. In reference to the symbolical action described chap. xxv. 15, Moab was represented as about to be reduced to a state of degraded and derisive wretchedness. *סָפַק* signifies to draw or *smite the hands together*, Arab. *سفق*, to *turn back or down*. The idea here expressed is that of a person completely overcome with liquor, sinking down and turning or wallowing in his vomit. See



- 27 For was not Israel an object of derision to thee?  
Was he found among thieves?  
For as often as thou spakest against him,  
Thou didst shake thy head.
- 28 Abandon the cities and dwell in the rock,  
O inhabitants of Moab!  
And be as a dove that resteth in the passages  
Of the mouth of the abyss.
- 29 We have heard of the haughtiness of Moab, his excessive  
pride,  
His pride and his haughtiness and his insolence,  
And the loftiness of his heart.
- 30 I know, saith Jehovah, his indignation,  
And the falsehood of his pretensions,  
The falsehood which he practises.
- 31 Therefore I will howl for Moab,  
I will cry out for the whole of Moab,  
Moan for the men of Kir-heres.
- 32 With the weeping of Jazer I will weep for thee,  
O vine of Sibmah!

Meier's Hebräisches Wurzelwörterbuch, pp. 314, 315. *אֶפְרַיִם* is emphatic. There is in this, and the following verse, a reference to the violent occupation of the Hebrew territory beyond Jordan on the part of the Moabites.

28. It is not unusual for wild doves to have their nests in the sides and roofs of caverns.

—φύγεν ὥστε πέλεια

\*Η ῥά θ' ὑπ' ἱρῆκος κοίλῃν εἰσέπτατο  
πέτρην.—*Iliad*. xxi. 493.

Qualis spelunca subito commota columba,  
Cui domus, et dulces latebroso in pumice  
nidi.—*Æneid*. v. 213.

29—31. Comp. Is. xvi. 6, 7. The assertion of Gesenius, that the words of Isaiah, which have there so suitable a reference, lose it in Jeremiah, is without any foundation. The reference is not, indeed, the same; but the language, as introduced by our prophet, though not that of a reply, on the part of the Jews, comes in with good effect, after an ironical call to the Moabites to take refuge

in the clefts of the rock. The words, on the whole, are the same in both passages; but are partly varied by Jeremiah, in such a manner as to show, that he, and not Isaiah, was the copyist. While the language of ver. 30 is that of Jehovah, that of ver. 31 and 32 is to be ascribed to the prophet. It is no unusual thing with the prophets to introduce the expression of their own feelings, while denouncing judgments against transgressors. See chap. xxiii. 9. Micah i. 8. For the meaning of *אֶפְרַיִם* and *בְּרָיִם*, see my Comment. on Isaiah. Subaud. *אֶפְרַיִם* before *בְּרָיִם*. For *אֶפְרַיִם* in Isaiah, our prophet uses the shorter form *אֶפְרַיִם*, as in Isaiah xvi. 11. For the change of *אֶפְרַיִם* into *אֶפְרַיִם*, see on Is. xvi. 7. *אֶפְרַיִם*, ver. 31, I cannot but suppose to be an error of transcription for *אֶפְרַיִם*, which is found in two MSS.

32. Some treat *אֶפְרַיִם* as the sign of comparison, but I take it to be equivalent to *אֶפְרַיִם* in the sense of *with*, or as expressing the material of which any thing consists,

- Thy tendrils passed over to the sea,  
 They reached to the sea of Jazer :  
 The destroyer hath fallen  
 Upon thy fruit-harvest and thy vintage.
- 33 And joy and gladness are taken away  
 From the fruitful field, even from the land of Moab ;  
 For I have caused the wine to cease from the presses,  
 There shall be no treading with shouting :  
 The shouting shall be no shouting.
- 34 At the cry of Heshbon they raise their voice  
 To Elealeh, to Jahaz—  
 From Zoar to Horonaim, to Eglath-Sheleshiah ;  
 For even the waters of Nimrim are wasted.
- 35 And I will cause to cease in Moab, saith Jehovah,  
 Him that offereth on the high-place,  
 And him that burneth incense to his gods.
- 36 Therefore my heart moaneth for Moab, like pipes,  
 Yea, my heart moaneth like pipes, for the men of Kir-heres,  
 Because the remaining things which they had acquired are  
 perished.
- 37 Surely on every head is baldness,  
 And every beard is cut off ;  
 On all hands are incisions,  
 And on the loins sackcloth.
- 38 On all the roofs of Moab,  
 And in all her streets  
 There is mourning ;  
 For I have broken Moab,  
 Like a vessel in which is no pleasure,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 39 How she is broken ! they howl,

as רִיבִּי, Deut. xxxiii. 13, 14 ; such weeping as that of the inhabitants of Jazer on account of the destruction of their vines. For the rest of the verse, see my Comment. on Is. xvi. 8, 9.

33. הִיָּדָה לֹא הִיָּדָה, *the shouting shall be no shouting*, i. e. it shall not be the joyous shouting of the labourers treading out the grapes, but only that of warriors or

of persons bewailing the destruction of their property.

34. For *Eglath-Sheleshiah*, see on Is. xv. 5.

37. Instead of רִיבִּי, ten MSS., originally six more, and perhaps another, read רִיבִּי ; but see on Is. xv. 2. It was customary with the nations of antiquity to cut themselves in giving vent to excessive

- How Moab ashamed hath turned her back !  
 Yea, Moab hath become an object of derision,  
 And of dismay to all around her.
- 10 For thus saith Jehovah,  
 Behold ! he shall fly as an eagle ;  
 And spread his wings over Moab.
- 4 The cities are taken,  
 And the fortresses captured ;  
 And the heart of the heroes of Moab shall be in that day  
 Like the heart of a travailing woman.
- 42 For Moab shall be destroyed from being a people,  
 Because he magnified himself against Jehovah.
- 43 Terror, and the pit, and the snare,  
 Are upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab !  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 44 He that fleeth from the terror  
 Shall fall into the pit,  
 And he that cometh up from the pit  
 Shall be taken in the snare :  
 For I will bring upon Moab the year of their punishment,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 45 The fugitives stood powerless in the shade of Heshbon ;

grief, but all such expressions of mourning were forbidden to the Hebrews, Lev. xix. 28.

40. "He," *i. e.* Nebuchadnezzar.

43, 44. See on Is. xxiv. 17, 18, whence, with little variation, the words are taken. כִּי, the Keri rightly כִּי, is anticipative of אֵלֶיךָ, as the pronominal suffixes frequently are in the Aramaic dialects.

45. The Moabites fled for refuge to Heshbon, but as the army of Nebuchadnezzar entered the country from the north, that city would be the first point of attack, and, on its being conquered, devastation would spread over the whole territory. סִיחֹן *Sihon*, the name of the ancient king of Heshbon, when it was in the possession of the Amorites. It is here used elliptically for עִיר סִיחֹן, *the city of Sihon*. Comp. עִיר סִיחֹן and עִיר סִיחֹן Numb. xxi. 27, 28, from which, with some

few variations, this and the following verse are borrowed. שָׁמָּה being of common gender takes the masculine מִשָּׁמָּה, as שָׁמָּה לְהָיִת, Ps. civ. 4. מִשָּׁמָּה, the reading of the original, Numb. xxi. 28, is found here in about twenty MSS. and sixteen editions, but it may only be an emendation, to make the word in both places agree. The last words of the verse are an imitation of part of the prophecy of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17, where שָׁמָּה for שָׁמָּה corresponds to שָׁמָּה in Jeremiah. Both are from שָׁמָּה, *to rage, make a tumult*. The Moabites are called "sons of tumult," or "tumultuous," on account of their furious roar when giving battle to their enemies. For פִּנֵּה, *the corner of the beard*, see on chap. ix. 25. If we render קִרְיָהּ, *crown of the head*, we must for the sake of consistency render שָׁמָּה, *corner of the beard*, וְהָיָה being understood. Dropping the metaphors we might give the passage thus :

But a fire hath gone forth from Heshbon,  
And a flame from the midst of Sihon,  
And it hath devoured the corner of the beard of Moab,  
And the crown of the head of the sons of tumult.

46 Alas for thee, O Moab !

The people of Chemosh have perished ;  
For thy sons are taken away into captivity,  
And thy daughters into the captive state.

47 Nevertheless I will reverse the captivity of Moab,

In the latter days, saith Jehovah :

Thus far the judgment on Moab.

*the corners of Moab, and the highest point of the sons of tumult.* The devastation was to reach the most elevated, and the most remote parts of the country. The genders in מִן and מִן are purposely chosen to correspond to מִן and מִן.

47. We have no historical accounts of

the restoration of the Moabites to the political importance which they formerly possessed ; but from several references in Josephus, it appears that the country had again become inhabited. *Antiq.* xiii. 13. § 5 ; 14. § 2 ; 15. § 4.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

The predictions contained in this chapter belong to the same period with those in the preceding. See the preface to chap. xlviii.

We have first a short prophecy relating to the Ammonites, 1—6 ; then one respecting the Idumæans, 7—22. This is followed by brief predictions concerning the Damascenes, 23—27 ; the Kedarenes and Hazorites, 28—33 ; and the Elamites, 34—39.

1

### CONCERNING AMMON.

THUS saith Jehovah :

Hath Israel no sons ?

Hath he no heir ?

1. מִן מִן, CONCERNING THE AMMONITES. The Ammonites were descended from Lot, and occupied the territory to the north of the country of Moab, from which it was separated by the River Arnon. On the west, between them and the Jordan, lay the country belonging to

the tribes of Reuben and Gad. In conjunction with their allies, the Syrians, Amalekites, Moabites, and other nations, the Ammonites were often engaged in war with the Hebrews. They sent auxiliary troops to assist Nebuchadnezzar at the conquest of Jerusalem, and

- Why doth their king inherit Gad?  
 And his people inhabit its cities?
- 2 Therefore, behold! the days come, saith Jehovah,  
 When I will cause the war-shout  
 To be heard at Rabbah of the sons of Ammon,  
 And she shall become a desolate heap;  
 Her daughters also shall be burned with fire,  
 And Israel shall possess those who possessed him,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 3 Howl, O Heshbon! for Ai is destroyed;  
 Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah;  
 Gird on sackcloth,  
 Mourn, and run to and fro by the walls,  
 For their king is gone into captivity,  
 His priests and his princes together.
- 4 Why shouldst thou boast of the valleys?  
 Thy valley is flowing, O apostate daughter!  
 That trusted in her treasures, saying,  
 Who can come to me?
- 5 Behold! I will bring fear upon thee,  
 Saith the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
 From all around thee;

proudly exulted over its fall; and at last, when the two tribes and a half were carried into captivity, they took possession of their country. It is to this last circumstance, that the pointed interrogations in this verse refer. For *מלך*, *their king*, see on Amos i. 15; v. 26, and Zeph. i. 5. To Jehovah as king of the Hebrews, the country occupied by them peculiarly belonged. This the Ammonites had usurped, and placed under the protection of Moloch, who, in a theocratic sense, is here called their king.

*רָבָה*, *Rabbah*, i.e. the great, the metropolis of the Ammonites. See my Comment. on Amos i. 14.

3. *אֵי*, *Ai*, a city of the Ammonites, probably lying opposite to Heshbon, and which being taken, the turn came to the latter city, then belonging to the Moabites. By "the daughters of Rabbah" are meant the adjacent towns and

villages, which were dependent upon it for protection and support. Comp. Josh. xv. 44—47. Hitzig ascribes the absence of the regular transposition of the *ר* and the *ש* in *רַבָּה* to the influence of the reduplication of the *ש*, which, for the sake of euphony, required the *ר* to be removed further back. The city having been destroyed, and the religious establishment broken up, nothing but the walls were left; beside which the inhabitants of the neighbouring places are tauntingly invited to walk, and contemplate the melancholy scene.

4, 5. The valleys, which, from their fertility, might be said to flow with milk and honey, were now to flow with the blood of the slain. The Ammonites might be called "apostates," because, instead of worshipping Jehovah, the God of their father Lot, they were the worshippers of Moloch. Before the interrogative *מִי*, *who*, the verb *יָבִי* is to be

And ye shall be driven away, each one before him,  
And there shall be none collecting the fugitives.

- 6 Nevertheless, afterwards I will reverse  
The captivity of the children of Ammon,  
Saith Jehovah.

7

## CONCERNING EDM.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
Is there no longer wisdom in Teman ?  
Hath counsel failed from the intelligent ?  
Is their wisdom expended ?

- 8 Flee, turn, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan !  
For I will bring the destruction of Edom upon him,  
The time when I will punish him.

understood, either in the common form, וְהָיָה, or in that of וְהָיָה לָהֶם, which is found in three of the early editions, whence, in the opinion of De Rossi, it has found its way into two or three MSS. The LXX. supplies the ellipsis by λέγουσα. וְהָיָה is to be taken as a collective.

6. This prediction was probably fulfilled in the time of Cyrus. In that of the Maccabees, the Ammonites were a powerful people, 1 Macc. v 6, 7.

7. וְהָיָה CONCERNING EDM. See on Is. xxxiv. 5, and Amos i. 11. Between certain parts of this prophecy and portions of that of Obadiah there is such a palpable agreement, that there cannot remain a doubt but that one of them must have read the work of the other. The more probable opinion is, that priority in point of time is to be assigned to Obadiah, and that Jeremiah borrowed from him just as he has done from the books of Numbers and Isaiah. See preface to Obadiah.—For תֵּמָנִי, *Teman*, as a province and city of Idumæa, see on Amos i. 12. Its philosophy was celebrated in the most ancient times. See on Obad. 8.—וְהָיָה is the participle of יָדָה, *to be intelligent, skilled, prudent*.—וְהָיָה, *Arab.*

וְהָיָה, *effusus fuit, libere dimisit, to send or pour out abundantly*, to be exhausted, expended. The prophet, varying his

language, asks a third time, what has become of the boasted wisdom of the Temanites ? Could it no longer devise measures of safety ? was it completely exhausted ? had it expended itself, so that there was none left ? For the idea of pouring out or emptying in reference to intelligence, comp. the use of וְהָיָה, Is. xix. 3 ; Jer. xix. 7.

8. If we take וְהָיָה as a rare instance of a Hophal imperative, then all the three verbs may be read in that mood, which suits the spirit of the passage better than the preterite tense. The LXX. render וְהָיָה by ἐκτρέφει in the imperative. Comp. for another instance of an imperative in Hophal, וְהָיָה, Ezek. xxxii. 19. This conjugation has here, as in many other instances, the signification of Kal. By changing the Kametz, however, into Patach, we should have the Imperative of Hiphil, which the verb may originally have been pronounced to express. וְהָיָה does not mean to dwell deep in the earth, as Gesenius and others explain it, or to retire into the deep caverns which abounded in the Idumæan territory, but to go deep or far into the Arabian desert, whether the Chaldean troops would not think of penetrating.—וְהָיָה, *Dedan*, the name of an Arabian tribe bordering on Idumæa. It consisted of the descendants of Jokshan, and of Abraham by Keturah.

- 9 If vintagers had come to thee,  
Would they not have left some gleanings?  
If thieves by night,  
Would they not have destroyed what was sufficient for them?
- 10 But I will strip Esau bare,  
I will uncover all his secret places,  
So that he shall not be able to conceal himself;  
His seed shall be destroyed,  
And his brethren and his neighbours,  
And he shall be no more.
- 11 Leave thy orphans, I will preserve them,  
And let thy widows confide in me.
- 12 For thus saith Jehovah:  
Behold! those to whom it did not belong to drink the cup,  
Have certainly drunk it;  
And art thou he that should be held altogether innocent?  
Thou shalt not be held innocent,  
But thou shalt certainly drink.

9. <sup>א</sup> for <sup>היה</sup>. It is forcibly implied in the interrogations here put, that the invading army would spare nothing; but, on the contrary, would leave the country empty and bare.

10. Though most of the verbs in this verse are in the Preterite tense, as are also some of those in the preceding verses, yet, to accord in sense with <sup>יב</sup>, and with the imperatives in ver. 8, they all require to be rendered in the future. <sup>היה</sup> has been supposed to stand for <sup>היה</sup>; but see for instances of a root <sup>היה</sup>, Is. xxvi. 20; 1 Kings xxii. 25.—The utter annihilation of the Idumæans as a distinct political power, is here expressly predicted; and though this was not effected by Nebuchadnezzar, for we afterwards find them engaged in war with the Jews, yet they become altogether extinct in history after the time of the Romans.

11. No persons are more to be pitied than the widows and orphans of those who have been killed by an invading army. Considerable difficulty has been found in the interpretation of this verse. The positions, that the words are addressed to the Jews by Jehovah, or that

they are addressed by the Jews to the Idumæans, are too forced to recommend themselves for adoption. Except they be regarded as having a special reference to the Dedanites, ver. 8, it is impossible consistently to arrive at any other conclusion, than that they are addressed to the Idumæans, who form the subject both of the preceding and following verses. Though, as predicted, ver. 10, none of the seed of Esau should ultimately be left, in other words, that as a people they should become extinct, yet in the immediately approaching calamity the widows and orphan children were to be preserved through the special providence of the Most High. With respect to these, the words contain a gracious and encouraging promise, but as it regards the adult male population, they have, on the contrary, the aspect of a threatening, inasmuch as they obviously imply that none of them would be left to protect or provide for their families.—<sup>היה</sup>, the masculine instead of the feminine, perhaps for the sake of greater force at the end of the verse.

12. Comp. on chap. xxv. 15, 16, 29. The meaning of the prophet is not that

- 13 For I have sworn by myself, saith Jehovah,  
That Bozrah shall become an object of astonishment,  
Of reproach, of desolation, and of execration ;  
And all her cities shall be desolate for ever.
- 14 I have heard a report from Jehovah,  
And a messenger is sent among the nations ;  
Collect yourselves, and come against her,  
Yea, rise up to the war.
- 15 For behold ! I have made thee small among the nations ;  
Despised among men.
- 16 Thy formidable character,  
The pride of thy heart deceived thee ;  
Dwelling in the clefts of the rock,  
Occupying the summits of the hills ;  
Though, like the eagle, thou hast built thy nest on high,  
Thence I will bring thee down,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 17 And Edom shall become an object of astonishment,  
Every one that passeth by her shall be astonished,  
And shall hiss on account of all her strokes.
- 18 As it was in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah,  
And their neighbouring cities, saith Jehovah,  
No one shall dwell there,  
Neither shall any son of man lodge there.
- 19 Behold ! as a lion he cometh up  
From the pride of Jordan to the strong abode ;  
For I will give a wink, I will make him run away from her.  
But who is the chosen one whom I will appoint against her ?

the Jews did not deserve to drink the cup of Divine indignation, but that, from the covenant relation in which they stood to Jehovah, it might have been expected that they would be spared.

13. For בֹּזְרָא, BOZRAH, see on Is. xxxiv. 6.

14, 15. Comp. on Obad. 1, 2.

16. The Idumæans proudly imagined, that the terror with which the celebrity of their power had inspired those by whom they were surrounded, would secure them against any hostile attack. וְיִשְׂרָאֵל and יְהוּדָה are in apposition, on which

account the verb is made to agree with the latter noun in the masculine gender. Comp. on Obad. 3, 4.

19. Nebuchadnezzar, the author of the devastation, though not named, is compared to a rampant lion coming up into the inhabited country from the thickets of Jordan. Comp. on chap. xii 5. עָזָא, *durableness, strength*, from עָזָא, *to be perennial, constant, durable*. The impregnable rocky fastnesses of Idumæa are intended by עֲמֻקֵּי יְהוּדָה. יְהוּדָה is not to be taken adverbially, but strictly as the first person singular in Hiphil, indicating that it was



For who is like me ?

And who shall set me a time ?

And who is the shepherd that can stand before me ?

20 Therefore hear ye the determination of Jehovah,

Which he hath formed against Edom ;

And his purposes

Which he hath devised against the inhabitants of Teman ;

Surely the smallest of the flock shall drag them along,

Surely their habitation shall be astounded at them.

21 At the sound of their fall the earth shall shake,

As for the cry, the sound of it shall be heard at the Red Sea.

22 Behold ! as the eagle he shall ascend and fly,

And shall spread his wings over Bozrah ;

And the heart of the heroes of Edom shall be in that day

Like the heart of a travailing woman.

only necessary to give the king of Babylon a hint to proceed in the direction of Idumæa. Root נָנָה, *to tremble, use a tremulous motion*, as with the cyclid in winking ; hence *to wink*. נָנָה, *a moment*. German Augenblick, *eye-wink*. The ease with which the conquest would be gained is thus tersely expressed, as well as by נָנָה, *I will cause him to run away from her*. No sooner should the invader enter the land, than, his work done, he should be ordered elsewhere. It is quite unnatural to refer the suffix in נָנָה to any other subject than that which is understood in נָנָה, i.e. Nebuchadnezzar. There is no other masculine antecedent. The repeated interrogations are intended to signalize the universal conqueror whom no power had been able to resist. Jehovah vindicates to himself the right to appoint the day of battle. נָנָה, *to stand before*, does not here signify to resist, but to assume the attitude of servants, ready to receive and execute the orders of their master. "Shepherd," the usual metaphor for king.

20. To refer "the smallest of the flock" either to the Idumæans, or to the Jews, is inappropriate in such connexion. I cannot but think that the weakest of the Chaldean army are in-

tended. Since monarchs are metaphorically spoken of as shepherds, in the sense of warrior kings, at the close of the preceding verse, it was not unnatural to represent the army under the command of the great shepherd Nebuchadnezzar as his flock. Comp. chap. vi. 3 ; l. 45. Thus Vatablus : vilissimi exercitus Chaldæorum. The weakest of his army should drag the Idumæan captives along in chains. אִם־לֹא, *if not*, a strong mode of asseveration for the purpose of expressing the certainty of any event. נָנָה is used intransitively.

21. For נָנָה, which refers to נָנָה, we find the less appropriate reading נָנָה in eighty-four MSS. ; it has been originally in fourteen more ; it is in three by correction, and is in the text of twenty-one printed editions. The only version which supports it is the Targ. Neither reading is exhibited by the LXX. and Arab. ; but

the Peshito has נָנָה, and the Hexaplar-Syriac נָנָה, both having

found the singular feminine suffix in their copies. נָנָה is the nominative absolute, and is not to be pointed נָנָה, the third singular feminine of the verb.

22. For Bozrah, see on Is. xxxiv. 6.

23

## CONCERNING DAMASCUS.

Hamath and Arpad are ashamed,  
Because they have heard a bad report, they melt away ;  
In the sea there is agitation, it cannot be quiet.

24 Damascus is enfeebled, she turneth about to flee,

Terror hath seized her,  
Anguish and sorrows have taken hold on her  
As those of a woman in childbirth.

25 How is not the celebrated city abandoned !

My joyous city !

26 Therefore her youths shall fall in her broad places,

And all the military shall perish in that day,  
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.

27 For I will kindle a fire on the wall of Damascus,

And it shall devour the palaces of Benhadad.

28 CONCERNING KEDAR, AND CONCERNING THE KINGDOMS OF  
HAZOR, WHICH NEBUCHADNEZZAR, THE KING OF BABYLON,  
SMOTE :

Thus saith Jehovah :

Arise, go up to Kedar,

And destroy the sons of the East.

29 Their tents and their flocks they shall take,

23. For DAMASCUS, see on Is. xvii. 1 ; and for Hamath and Arpad, see on Is. i. 9. The attack on these Syrian cities here predicted appears to have been that referred to by Josephus, and to have taken place five years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. (Jewish Antiquities, book x. chap. 9, § 7.) For דַּמָּשְׁקַי, "is the sea," sixteen MSS., and perhaps one or two more, read דַּמָּשְׁקַי, "like the sea."

25. The inhabitants of DAMASCUS are parenthetically introduced as bewailing her desertion and the cessation of her joys. The יוֹד in דַּמָּשְׁקַי is not paragogic, but the pronominal suffix, taken as a collective. This ancient city was celebrated for its felicitous position, the exquisite beauty of its environs, the magnitude of its temples, and the wealth of its inhabitants.

27. Comp. Amos i. 4. Benhadad was the name of several kings of Syria, who appear to have had splendid palaces.

28, 29. קֶדָר, KEDAR, a patronymic : used of the descendants of Kedar, one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 13, who led a Bedoween life. They had a wide range of country between the Red Sea and the Euphrates. Pliny calls them Cedrei. (Nat. Hist. v. 11.) They were in all probability the Arabians who infested the Jews in the days of Jehoram, 2 Chron. xxi. 16.—הַזֹּרִי, HAZOR, the name of several cities in different parts of Palestine, but here it is obviously employed to designate a country of Arabia Deserta, in the proximity of the Kedarenes. The מְדִינֹתָם, kingdoms mentioned, formed the combinations of tribes subject to more or less powerful Sheiks, who ruled them with a sort of kingly power. In geographical relation to Palestine, the Kedarenes and Hazorites were דְּבָרֵי הַמִּזְמֹר, sons of the East.

29. Having summoned the Chaldeans to attack and spoil the Arabians, the prophet describes the result of the in-

- And their curtains and all their articles ;  
 And their camels they shall carry away for themselves,  
 And they shall cry on account of them : Fear all around.
- 30 Flee ye, take a great flight,  
 Dwell deep, O inhabitants of Hazor,  
 Saith Jehovah ;  
 For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath formed a plan  
 against you,  
 He hath devised a purpose against you.
- 31 Arise, go up against the careless nation, that dwelleth securely,  
 Saith Jehovah ;  
 It hath neither doors nor bars,  
 It dwelleth alone.
- 32 And their camels shall become a prey,  
 And the multitude of their cattle a spoil,  
 And I will scatter to every wind  
 Those who have narrowed beards ;  
 And I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 33 And Hazor shall become an abode of jackals,  
 A desolation for ever ;  
 No man shall dwell there,  
 And no son of man shall lodge in her.
- 34 THE WORD OF JEHOVAH WHICH WAS COMMUNICATED TO JEREMIAH THE PROPHET, CONCERNING ELAM, IN THE BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH, SAYING :

vasion, as it respects the nomadic property of the latter, who, on being surrounded by the hostile troops, would give utterance to cries of alarm.

30. Jeremiah now turns to the Arabians, and urges their flight into a remote part of the great desert, whither the enemy would not think of pursuing them, but would content themselves with the plunder. No conqueror has ever ventured into this desert. A great number of MSS. and many Editions read *עֲלֵיכֶם*, "against you," instead of *עֲלֵיהֶם*, "against them."

31—33. A repetition of the summons to the Chaldeans, and a descriptive prediction of the plundering and desolating

effects of the invasion. Not anticipating any attack, as they lay out of the track of the hostile armies of Asia, the Arabs had taken no measures of defence, but lived in unwall'd towns and villages. For *מְצִיץ בִּיָּדָא*, lit. *narrowed of beard*, see on chap. ix. 25. The phrase *מִכָּל צָרָרָא*, *from all sides thereof*, must be taken restrictively of those parts of the country in the direction of the Chaldeans.

34. *עֵלְמָא* ELAM, the Elymais of the Greeks and Romans, forming part of the ancient Susiana, on the west of Persia proper, and used in Scripture as the designation of that country in general. The date of this prophecy coincides with that of chaps. xxvii. 1, and xxviii. 1. For the

- 35 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,  
Behold ! I will break the bow of Elam,  
The prime of their might.
- 36 And I will bring four winds against Elam  
From the four ends of heaven,  
And I will scatter them to all these winds ;  
And there shall not be a nation  
Whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.
- 37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies,  
And before those that seek their life ;  
And I will bring calamity upon them,  
The fury of my anger, saith Jehovah ;  
And I will send the sword after them,  
Till I have consumed them.
- 38 And I will set my throne in Elam,  
And will destroy thence kings and princes,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 39 Nevertheless, it shall be in the last of the days  
I will reverse the captivity of Elam,  
Saith Jehovah.

order of the words אֶת־בֹּרְחָתָם־וְאֶת־קִרְיָתָם־וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ־הַיָּבֵשׁ, see on chap. xiv. 1.

35. The Elamites were celebrated as archers. See on Is. xxii. 6; and Strabo, xv. 3, 12; Livy, xxxvii. 40. קֶרֶךְ, *bow*, stands collectively for *bows*, and this for bowmen or archers. See on Is. xxi. 17. גִּבּוֹרִים, *strength*, is the abstract put for the concrete גִּבּוֹרִים, *mighty men*, warriors.

36. The meaning here is not that four different armies, set forth under the figure of *winds*, were to attack Elam from the four different quarters of the compass, but that warriors from these quarters serving in the army of Nebuchadnezzar should invade the country, and scatter the people in every direction. For עַד־עַד, *for ever*, which some copyist has carelessly adopted, many MSS. and two of the oldest Editions read with the Keri, עַד־עַד, *Elam*.

37. That Elam was conquered by the Chaldeans and reduced to a province of Babylon appears from Dan. viii. 2, 27,

which is a sufficient confirmation of the prophecy, though profane history is silent with respect to the event.

38. Why Jehovah executed judgment upon the Elamites, we are not informed. Ewald and Hävernick think that they may have formed part of the Chaldean army which captured Jerusalem, and effected the first captivity in the days of Jehoiachin. Comp. Ezek. xxxii. 24. They do not appear *as a people* to have molested the Hebrews. It is possible that they may have been addicted to idolatry, and thus been distinguished from the Persians proper, whose religion in the main was monotheistic.

39. The restoration here predicted doubtless took place on the reduction of Babylon by Cyrus, when the scattered Elamites would naturally return to their native country. Whether the *Ἑλαμίται*, Acts ii. 9, were Jews resident in the province, or proselyted Elamites, or a mixture of both, cannot be determined.

## CHAPTER L.

Having finished his announcement of the judgments to be inflicted upon the different nations by the king of Babylon, the prophet in this and the following chapter delivers, at greater length, a prediction concerning the destruction of that power itself by the Medes. It is the longest prophecy in the Bible, consisting of upwards of an hundred verses. It is divided by Eichhorn into three parts, and by Rosenmüller into six; but is properly considered by Maurer as composed without any special regard to order; the prophet treating the materials quite in an untrammelled manner, repeating again and again the same argument. The repetitions, indeed, are of such a nature as to induce the conclusion that the whole consists of predictions originally uttered at different times, and now collected by Jeremiah for the purpose specified, chap. li. 59—64. The authenticity of the oracle is sufficiently defended by Hitzig against Von Coelln and Gramberg, by whom it had been denied. "The *usus loquendi* and circle of imagery, as likewise the style, the turns, the concluding formulas, the unanticipated dialogues, are unmistakeably those of Jeremiah." An impartial examination, however, of the passages against which Hitzig himself excepts, will show the groundless nature of his objections. The hypothesis of De Wette and Ewald, that the writer whom the Germans designate the Pseudo-Isaiah, was the author of the oracle, is equally groundless.

The date and occasion of the composition are expressly stated, chap. li. 59, 60, to have been the fourth year of Zedekiah, when Seraiah, to whom the oracle was committed, was sent by that monarch to Babylon.

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1 THE WORD WHICH JEHOVAH SPAKE CONCERNING BABYLON AND  
AGAINST THE LAND OF THE CHALDEANS, THROUGH JEREMIAH  
THE PROPHET :

- 2 Declare ye among the nations,  
And publish, and raise a banner,  
Publish, conceal not ;  
Say : Babylon is taken,  
Bel is put to shame,  
Merodach is confounded ;  
Her idols are put to shame,  
Her logs are confounded.
- 3 For a nation cometh up against her from the north,

1—3. The reason why the fall of Babylon was to be announced among the nations, was that the Hebrews resident there might be informed of it, and avail themselves of the opportunity which was afforded them to return to their own land, as well as that the natives might rejoice at their deliverance from the power of the oppressor. For בֵּל, *Bel*, the principal Babylonian deity, see on

It shall make her land desolate,  
And there shall be no inhabitant in it ;  
Both man and beast are fled, they are gone.

- 4 In those days and at that time, saith Jehovah,  
The children of Israel shall come,  
They and the children of Judah together,  
They shall proceed weeping as they go,  
And shall seek Jehovah their God.
- 5 They shall ask for Zion, with their faces hitherward,  
Come and let us join ourselves to Jehovah,  
By an everlasting covenant,  
Not to be forgotten.
- 6 My people have been lost sheep,  
Their shepherds have caused them to wander,  
They have turned them away on the mountains ;  
From mountain to hill they have gone,  
They have forgotten the place of their rest.
- 7 All who found them devoured them,  
And their adversaries said, We are not guilty ;

Is. xlv. 1; and for מֵרֹדַךְ, *Merodach*, another of the deities worshipped at Babylon, see on Is. xxxix. 1. The idols are represented as ashamed and confounded, because they were unable to defend the city of which they were the tutelary gods. By personifying them, the prophet heightens the effect of the representation.—To maintain, from the circumstance that many of the verbs in this prophecy are in the preterite tense, that the writer must have lived after the event, would argue gross ignorance of the prophetic style, in which the preterite is frequently used for the future, for the purpose of expressing the certainty of the events predicted. In the present case there is a large mixture of both tenses, in accordance with the varied manner in which Jeremiah presents the subject.—The only power capable of subduing Babylon was Media, which is here described by its relative geographical position.

4, 5. At the termination of the captivity the descendants of the ten tribes, who had been removed into the East by

the Assyrians, were, jointly with their brethren of the southern kingdom, who had been removed by Nebuchadnezzar, to be restored to the land of their fathers. See on Hosea i. 10, 11. Recovered from idolatry, and deeply contrite on account of it, they would avail themselves of the liberty granted by Cyrus, return to Palestine, and thenceforth worship and serve Jehovah to the utter exclusion of idols. The fulfilment of what is here predicted relative to their entering into covenant, we have Neh. ix. 38; x. 29, &c.—The position of the prophet, as being in or near Zion when he wrote, is distinctly marked by the adverb הֵנָּה, which uniformly signifies *hither*. It is only in the phrase הֵנָּה וְהֵנָּה, *hither and thither*, that the latter signification obtains.

6, 7. הֵנָּה the textual reading connects with עָפָר; the Keri הֵנָּה, with the preceding predicate. The Keri וְהֵנָּה, is preferable to עָפָר in the text, as the parallel וְהֵנָּה shows.—The language here ascribed to the enemies of the Jews, was that of their actions, not that of their lips.

- Forasmuch as they have sinned against Jehovah,  
 The proper pasture,  
 Even Jehovah, the hope of their fathers.
- 8 Flee out of the midst of Babylon,  
 And go forth from the land of the Chaldeans,  
 And be as he-goats before the flock.
- 9 For behold ! I will rouse and bring up against Babylon  
 A multitude of great nations from the north country,  
 And they shall set themselves in array against her ;  
 Thence she shall be taken,  
 Their arrows shall be like those of a prosperous hero,  
 Who returns not empty.
- 10 And Chaldea shall become a spoil ;  
 All who spoil her shall be satisfied,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 11 Because ye rejoiced,  
 Because ye exulted,  
 Ye plunderers of mine inheritance ;  
 Because ye skipped like a threshing heifer,  
 And neighed like stallions,

They unintentionally punished them on account of their apostasy from Jehovah. They were his instruments, though only gratifying their own lust of conquest. Comp. Is. x. 5—7. *תְּהִי לִי*, the LXX. render *τομή δικαιοσύνης*, *pasture of righteousness*, which construction, or that of *fold of righteousness*, is adopted by J. D. Michaelis, Dahler, Scholz, Maurer, and Ewald ; meaning that Jehovah was the true source of good, contrasted with the false pasturage which the Jews had sought in idolatry. This interpretation seems the more appropriate in this connexion, Jehovah having been spoken of as the *resting-place* of his flock in the preceding verse ; though the same words are obviously used of Jerusalem as the *abode of righteousness*, chap. xxxi. 23.

8. The Hebrews are called to take their departure boldly and quickly, as the he-goats move on before the flock.

9. *תִּפְסֹן* is to be taken in its usual acceptation as an adverb of *place*, and not as one of *time*, which signification is more than doubtful. The reference is

to the quarter whence the attack was to be made upon Babylon.—For *תִּפְסֹן*, *be-reaving*, or destroying, in the sense of making childless, the reading *תִּפְסֹן*, *prosperous*, is found in eleven of De Rossi's MSS., and has originally been in four others. It is exhibited in six ancient and thirty-five later editions, and is supported by the LXX., Symm., and the Syriac. It is decidedly the preferable reading.

11. The Keri, supported by MSS. and early editions, reads the verbs *תִּפְסֹן*, *תִּפְסֹן*, *תִּפְסֹן*, as second plurals, thus : *תִּפְסֹן*, *תִּפְסֹן*, *תִּפְסֹן*. Some would render *תִּפְסֹן*, *grazing heifer*, a young heifer at the grass, fat and frisky ; but *תִּפְסֹן* cannot be the root, because it does not agree in gender with *תִּפְסֹן*. The Keri therefore is to be preferred, *תִּפְסֹן*, *threshing*, being the regular feminine participle of *תִּפְסֹן* to *thresh*. It not being permitted to muzzle the mouth of the animal, she might eat at pleasure, and thus become wanton. Twenty-four MSS. and four printed editions read *תִּפְסֹן*. For *תִּפְסֹן*, see on chap. viii. 16.

- 12 Your mother is greatly ashamed,  
 She that bare you blusheth ;  
 Behold ! the last of nations  
 Is a desert, an arid region, a steppe.
- 13 Because of the indignation of Jehovah  
 She shall not be inhabited,  
 But shall be entirely desolate :  
 Every one who passeth by Babylon  
 Shall be astonished, and shall hiss  
 On account of all her strokes.
- 14 Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about,  
 All ye that bend the bow ;  
 Shoot at her, spare not an arrow ;  
 For she hath sinned against Jehovah.
- 15 Raise a cry against her round about,  
 She hath surrendered,  
 Her foundations are fallen in,  
 Her walls are destroyed ;  
 For it is Jehovah's vengeance that is taken upon her,  
 As she hath done, do to her.
- 16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, .  
 And him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest ;  
 Because of the sword of the oppressor,  
 Let them turn each to his own people,  
 And flee each to his own country.

12. By *אִמִּיךָ*, *your mother*, is meant Babylon as the metropolis of the empire, not the inhabitants, as Gesenius and others interpret. Before its fall, the empire was, in point of opulence and strength, the first of nations : when conquered by Cyrus, it became the last, and ceased from being reckoned among them, having ultimately, as described in this verse and the following, become utterly desolate.

14—16. A summons to the Median army to proceed to the attack, which is described in the 15th verse as having already proved successful. The cry to be raised against Babylon was the war-shout, or the terrific shout of the warriors inspiring each other to the onset. 1 Sam. xvii. 20 ; 2 Chron. xiii. 15. *נָתַתָּהּ*, *she hath given her hand*, i.e. submitted,

surrendered to the victor. Comp. the Latin *dare manus*. For *נָתַתָּהּ* three of De Rossi's MSS., and primarily another, read *נָתַתָּהּ*. Both verbs signify to *project*, *throw out*, hence *shoot*, as here.—*נִסְבֵּיהָ*, or correctly in the Keri *נִסְבֵּיהָ*, *foundations*, occurs only here, but is obviously cognate with *נִסְבֵּי*, Arab. *أسيس*, *أسية*,

Vulg. *fundamenta ejus*.

16. There is here an apt reference to the agricultural occupations of the inhabitants, who cultivated large fields within the walls of the city, by which means they could raise a quantity of grain sufficient to enable them to sustain a long siege. (Quin. Curtius, lib. v. cap. 1.) Having been collected from all the different countries which the Chaldeans



- 17 Israel hath been a scattered sheep,  
The lions have driven him away ;  
The first who devoured him was the king of Assyria,  
And the last, this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, hath gnawed  
his bones.
- 18 Therefore thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
Behold ! I will punish the king of Babylon, and his land ;  
As I punished the king of Assyria.
- 19 And I will restore Israel to his habitation,  
And he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan ;  
And his soul shall be satiated on mount Ephraim and Gilead.
- 20 In those days, and at that time, saith Jehovah,  
The iniquity of Israel may be sought for, but there shall be  
none,  
And the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found ;  
For I will pardon those whom I reserve.
- 21 Go up against the land of Merathaim,  
And against the inhabitants of Pekod ;  
Lay waste and destroy after them,  
Saith Jehovah,  
And do according to all that I have charged thee.

had subdued, the colonists should now have it in their power to return to their respective homes.

17. For the metaphor of a *lion* to denote a hostile foreign king, see chap. iv. 7 ; Nah. ii. 11, 12. By the gnawing of the bones, the rapacity of the king of Babylon is expressed.

19, 20. Though it is a fact, that the sin of idolatry, of which the Hebrews had been guilty, entirely ceased during their residence in Babylon, yet the terms *פֶּשַׁע*, *iniquity*, and *חַטֹּאת*, *sins*, seem rather to be here employed in the sense of *punishment* or *infections* on account of sin, a signification which the terms not unfrequently have in the Hebrew Scriptures. The calamities to which that people had been subjected had now come to an end: they were no longer found to exist. Those who remained, or survived the captivity, experienced the pardoning mercy of their God.

21. There is an animated paronomasia

עַל צִלְחֵי מֶרַתַּיִם. That *מֶרַתַּיִם*, *Merathaim*, and, *פֶּקֶד*, *Pekod*, are descriptive names of Babylon, is allowed on all hands, though there is some difference of opinion respecting the exact meaning of the former. That of the *doubly rebellious*, proposed by Dahler and adopted by Michaelis, Eichhorn, De Wette, Scholz, Ewald, and Maurer, is the most satisfactory. Most of these expositors, however, explain it of the two rebellions of the Babylonians against the Persians in the reigns of Darius Hystaspes, and Xerxes ; but Maurer more appropriately of the two-fold rebellion of the eastern power—first as wielded by the Assyrians, and then by the Babylonians their successors,—against Jehovah as the God of the Hebrews. Comp. verses 24, 29. *פֶּקֶד* signifies *visitation*, *punishment*, and designates Babylon as the city which was to be destroyed.—*אַחֲרֵיהֶם*, *after them*, refers to the complete devastation of the city after it had been deserted by the

- 22 There is the sound of battle in the land,  
And great destruction.
- 23 How the hammer of the whole earth  
Is cut down and broken !  
How Babylon hath become an object of astonishment  
Among the nations !
- 24 I laid the snare for thee,  
And thou art taken, O Babylon !  
But thou wast not aware of it ;  
Thou wast found and also captured,  
Because thou didst wage war against Jehovah.
- 25 Jehovah hath opened his arsenal,  
And brought out the weapons of his indignation,  
For the Lord Jehovah of Hosts hath a work  
In the land of the Chaldeans.
- 26 Come to her from the extremity,  
Open her stores, throw her up like heaps,  
And destroy her utterly ;  
Let her have nothing left.
- 27 Destroy all her bullocks,  
Let them go down to the slaughter ;  
Alas ! for them, for their day is come,  
The time of their punishment.
- 28 The voice of those who flee and make their escape  
From the land of Babylon,

inhabitants. It ultimately became a scene of utter desolation, which it continues to be in the present day. See on Is. xiii. 1.

23. The appropriate metaphor of *מַסָּכָה*, a hammer, is employed to set forth the destructive character of the Chaldean power. Comp. Is. xiv. 6.

24. Cyrus took the city by surprise : the government had no apprehension of the stratagem which he employed in drying up the Euphrates, and then entering by the upper and lower gates.

26. After *קֵץ*, extremity, *אֶרֶץ*, the earth, is understood, expressing the great distance whence the Median army came against Babylon.

27. By *בָּקָרִים*, bullocks, the princes and other magnates are meant. Comp. Gen.

xlix. 6, where *שָׁרִי*, ox, is employed to denote Shechem, the Hivite prince. In the expression "to go down to the slaughter," there would seem to be a reference to the position of the slaughter-houses, which it is natural to suppose stood by the side of the river. The princes to be killed are the nominative to *יִקָּרְאוּ*, and not the Medes.

28. The prophet in anticipation already hears the announcement of the capture of Babylon, brought to Judea by Jewish fugitives, who had made their escape on the occasion. Zion, though laid waste by the Chaldeans, is represented as the scene where the joyful news were to be published. Vengeance was to be wreaked upon the king of Babylon especially on account of the destruction of the temple,

- Announcing in Zion the vengeance of Jehovah our God,  
The vengeance on account of his temple.
- 29 Summon the archers against Babylon,  
All who draw the bow ;  
Let them encamp against her round about,  
That there may be no escape for her ;  
Recompense her according to her desert,  
According to all that she hath done, do to her ;  
For she hath acted insolently against Jehovah,  
Against the Holy One of Israel.
- 30 Therefore her young men shall fall,  
And all her warriors shall be destroyed in that day,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 31 Behold ! I am against thee, O thou proud one !  
Saith the Lord Jehovah of Hosts ;  
Surely thy day is come,  
The time when I will punish thee.
- 32 And the proud one shall stumble and fall in her open places,  
And he shall have none to raise him up ;  
And I will kindle a fire in his cities,  
And it shall devour all that are around him.
- 33 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts :  
The children of Israel and the children of Judah  
Are oppressed together ;  
And all who led them captive, hold them fast,  
They refuse to set them free.
- 34 Their Redeemer is strong,  
Jehovah of Hosts is his name,

and the desecration of its vessels, which he took and placed in the temple of Belus as trophies of his victory over the God of the Jews.

29. For קִיָּם, *archers*, compare Job xvi. 13.

30. The Babylonians were so discouraged by having lost some battles, that they retired within the walls of the city, and could not be induced to meet Cyrus again in the field.

31. Instead of קִיָּם, two of Kennicott's MSS., the LXX., Arab., Syr., Targ., and Vulg. read קִיָּם, and one of

De Rossi's and the Soncín. Prophets, קִיָּם. The sense is the same, only in the common reading Jehovah vindicates to himself the infliction of the punishment. By קִיָּם, *pride*, which is equivalent to קִיָּם, *man of pride* = *proud one*, the king of Babylon is intended.

33, 34. A renewed recognition of the captive condition of the Hebrews, and an assertion of the omnipotent interposition of Jehovah for their deliverance. The paronomasia in קִיָּם and קִיָּם is designedly formed, the more pointedly to express the contrast. The earth, which

He will certainly plead their cause,  
That he may give rest to the earth,  
And cause the inhabitants of Babylon to tremble.

- 35 A sword against the Chaldeans,  
Saith Jehovah;  
And against the inhabitants of Babylon,  
Against her princes and against her wise men.
- 36 A sword against the boasters,  
And they shall become foolish;  
A sword against her heroes,  
And they shall be astounded.
- 37 A sword against his horses and against his chariots,  
And against all the mingled people that are in the midst of her,  
And they shall become women;  
A sword against her treasures, and they shall be plundered.
- 38 A sword against the waters, and they shall dry up;  
For it is the land of graven images,  
And by their terrific idols they have shown themselves fools.

had been incessantly disturbed by the Chaldean wars, was now to enjoy tranquillity; but this tranquillity was to be purchased by the breaking up of the peace of Babylon. Comp. Is. xiv. 6—8. Some take *וְיָרִיב* in the sense of *causing to tremble*, but the verb has never this signification in Hiphil, except in reference to the movement of the eyelids, caused by winking.

35—38. An animated passage carried out by the figure anaphora, or the repetition of the same word at the commencement of the several members of discourse. Each verse begins with *וְיָרִיב*, a sword. The prophecy is directed against the sum total of what was in Babylon—the inhabitants generally, the princes, the philosophers, the astrologers, the native cavalry and foreign auxiliaries, together with the immense treasures collected from the nations which she had conquered; and the Euphrates, her plentiful supply of water as well as her defence. The change of the gender from the feminine to the masculine, ver. 37, specially marks the king as the object. For *וְיָרִיב*, mingled people, see on chap. xiv. 20. In ver. 38, the word *וְיָרִיב* is

not pointed *וְיָרִיב*, *Herev*, which signifies a sword, as in the five preceding instances, but *וְיָרִיב*, *Horev*, which signifies drought; and this, without any variety in all the pointed MSS. and printed editions. There can, however, be little doubt, that originally the word was pronounced in all cases alike, and that the change is to be attributed to a supposed incongruity of making a sword instrumental in drying up the waters. But there is in reality no more incongruity in employing the sword for this purpose than for seizing the treasures, as stated in the preceding verse. The term is used throughout metonymically—the weapon for those wielding it—the hostile conquering power—in a word, the soldiers whom Cyrus employed in digging the ditches into which he turned off the water of the Euphrates, so that entering the channel of the river by the gates above and below the city, they marched on dry ground to its conquest. Xenophon, *Cyropæd.* vii. See on Is. xlv. 27. Though omitted in the ordinary editions of the LXX., that of Grabe has *μάχαραν*; the Hexaplar-Syr. has *ܡܚܪܐܢ* without an asterisk; the

- 39 Therefore the wild beasts of the desert shall dwell with the  
jackals,  
The ostriches also shall dwell there,  
And it shall be inhabited no more for ever,  
Neither shall it be dwelt in to all generations.
- 40 As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
And their neighbouring cities,  
No one shall dwell there,  
Neither shall any son of man lodge in her.
- 41 Behold ! a people cometh from the north,  
Even a great nation, and many kings  
Shall be roused from the recesses of the earth.
- 42 They shall seize the bow, and the lance ;  
They are cruel, and will show no mercy ;  
Their voice shall roar like the sea,  
They shall ride on horses,  
In array as men for battle,  
Against thee, O daughter of Babylon !
- 43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them,  
And his hands have grown feeble ;  
Anguish hath seized him,  
And pain, as a woman in childbirth.
- 44 Behold ! he shall come up  
As a lion from the pride of Jordan,  
To the strong abode ;  
For I will give him a wink, I will make them run over her ;

Peshito Syr. ܠܫܝܢ;<sup>7</sup> the Slavonic, *Metch*;  
all signifying a sword. The word is  
rendered in the same way by Blayney,  
Ewald, Umbreit, and Scholz, and I  
have not scrupled to follow their ex-  
ample. Babylon might well be called  
“ a land of graven images.” Next to  
Egypt, it swarmed with idols. Many of  
them were huge and grotesque in ap-  
pearance, and calculated to inspire be-  
holders with terror. See Dan. iii. 1.

39, 40. A description of the state of  
complete desolation to which Babylon  
should be reduced. Comp. Is. xiii. 20—  
22; xxxiv. 14, 15. The latter of these two  
verses is a repetition of chap. xlix. 18.

41. The prophet here calls attention  
to the Medes, as marching against Baby-  
lon, in the same language which he had  
employed in describing the approach of  
the Chaldean army to the capture of  
Jerusalem, chap. vi. 22, 23. The kings  
were the allied princes and generals of  
the different armies which were collected  
under Cyrus, in the expedition against  
the Babylonian empire.

42. אִישׁ, a man, collectively for men,  
i.e. soldiers, as Is. xxi. 9. Scholz ex-  
plains the term as equivalent to *one man*,  
but this would require אִישׁ יָחִיד.

44. Comp. xlix. 19. אֲרָצָה is merely  
a corruption of אֲרָצִים, which is exhibited  
in several MSS. and in the Soncín. and

- But who is the chosen one whom I shall appoint against her ?  
 For who is like me ?  
 And who can set me a time ?  
 And who is this shepherd that shall stand before me ?
- 45 Therefore hear ye the determination of Jehovah,  
 Which he hath formed against Babylon,  
 And his purposes  
 Which he hath devised against the land of the Chaldeans ;  
 Surely the smallest of the flock shall drag them along,  
 Surely their habitation shall be astounded at them.
- 46 At the sound, " Babylon is taken," the earth is shaken,  
 And the cry is heard among the nations.

Brix. editions, and appears in the Keri. 45. Comp. xlix. 20. יְהוָה for יְהוָה, as  
 Some Codices have יְהוָה; but this is found originally in twenty MSS. and  
 probably a correction from chap. xlix. 19. expressed in the Syr., Vulg., and Targ.

## CHAPTER LI.

See Preface to the foregoing chapter.

- 1 THUS saith Jehovah :  
 Behold ! I will raise against Babylon,  
 And against those who dwell in Chaldea,  
 A destructive wind.
- 2 And I will send to Babylon winnowers,  
 And they shall winnow her,  
 And empty her land :  
 Surely they shall be against her all around  
 In the day of calamity.

1, 2. That יְהוָה is equivalent to בָּבֶל, *Babel*, in the sense of Babylonia, is evident from the parallelism ; but interpreters have differed as to the proper manner of construing it. The LXX. Χαλδαίους. Targ. יְהוּדָיִם, the *Chaldeans*. Symmachus and Rosenmüller merely retain the letters of the two words, as if they expressed a proper name: Λεβκαμύ, *Lebcamai*. The latter, however, in his Scholia adverts to the Athbash or cabbalistical mode of interpreting the Hebrew words, by taking them in the inverse

order from that in which they appear in the alphabet :—ת occupying the place of מ, ש that of ב, and so on throughout. On this principle יְהוָה will exactly correspond to יְהוָה, *Chaldeans*. It may be observed in support of this mode of resolving the words, that יְהוָה יְהוָה stand in the same relation to בָּבֶל, ver. 21, that יְהוָה יְהוָה do in this. Ewald, oddly imitating such mode of interpretation, reverses the German form *Chaldäa*, and presents *Aädluch*, in his translation. See on chap. xxv. 26. To what was there

- 3 Let not the archer bend his bow,  
Let him not be proud of his coat-of-mail;  
And spare ye not her young men,  
Exterminate the whole of her army.
- 4 The slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans,  
And those who are pierced through, in her streets.
- 5 For Israel is not left widower,  
Nor Judah by his God,  
By Jehovah of Hosts:  
Though their land is full of punishment  
From the Holy One of Israel.
- 6 Flee out of the midst of Babylon,  
And let every one save his own life;  
Perish not in her punishment;  
For it is the time of Jehovah's avenging,  
He rendereth her desert to her.
- 7 Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of Jehovah,  
Intoxicating the whole earth;  
The nations drank of her wine,  
Therefore the nations reel.
- 8 Babylon is suddenly fallen and broken;

observed in reference to the Athbash use of the alphabet, may be added for consideration, the fact of the use made by the prophet of the alphabetical arrangement of his poetry, not fewer than four of his five Elegies being composed in this style.—Under an agricultural metaphor, the prophet represents the Medo-Persian army as sent against Babylon to clear her of all that she contained.

3. The connexion shows that לֹא cannot be the preposition לְ; but that it must be taken as the negative לֹא, which is exhibited in twelve MSS., and has been originally in four more. It is likewise found in the Soncino and Brix. editions, and the word is so rendered in both the Syriac versions, the Vulg., Targ., and Talmud. The second לֹא, which is marked by the Masoretes as to be written but not read, and is accordingly left unpointed, is omitted in many MSS. and in some editions, and is manifestly an error of transcription. The words in the

former half of the verse are addressed to the Chaldeans who defended the city; those in the latter half to the army of Cyrus.

5. The suffix in בְּיָמֶיהָ refers to Israel and Judah; and בְּיָמֶיהָ is here, like בְּיָמֶיהָ and בְּיָמֶיהָ, to be taken as expressive of the result of sin and guilt, viz. its punishment.

6. The address is to the Jews, who are warned to make their escape from the devoted city.

7. The sense is not, as some interpret, that Babylon had intoxicated the nations by her idolatries, and led them to practise the same, but that she had been employed by Jehovah as an instrument of punishing the enemies of his people. She is metaphorically called "a golden cup," to indicate the abundance of her wealth and the splendour of her power. Comp. Dan. ii. 38, and see on Is. xiv. 4.

8, 9. The nations are called to come to the assistance of the fallen empire,

- How! ye for her ;  
 Take balsam for her wound,  
 Perhaps she may be healed.
- 9 We have attempted to heal Babylon,  
 But she would not be healed ;  
 Abandon her,  
 And let us go, every one to his own country ;  
 For her judgment reacheth to the heavens,  
 It riseth to the skies.
- 10 Jehovah hath produced the grounds of our acquittal ;  
 Come, and let us declare in Zion  
 The work of Jehovah our God.
- 11 Polish the arrows, fill the shields,  
 Jehovah hath excited the spirit of the kings of Media,  
 For his design is against Babylon,  
 To destroy her ;  
 Because it is the avenging of Jehovah,  
 The avenging of his temple.
- 12 Elevate the standard on the walls of Babylon,  
 Strengthen the guard,  
 Set the watchmen,  
 Prepare the ambuscades ;  
 For Jehovah hath both purposed and done  
 What he hath spoken against the inhabitants of Babylon.
- 13 O thou that art dwelling beside great waters,  
 Abundant in treasures,  
 Thine end is come,  
 The measure of thy rapine.

but they reply that it is hopeless, and abandon her to her fate.

10. The Hebrews are now introduced as encouraging one another to return to Jerusalem, and there gratefully celebrate the goodness of their covenant God in the faithful fulfilment of his promises to deliver them from their oppressor. צִדְקָתָא, *righteousnesses*, i. e. grounds or proofs of righteousness. Though the Jews had contracted guilt by their rebellion against Jehovah, on account of which he had employed Nebuchadnezzar to punish them, yet as that

monarch had treated them with a severity which they had not merited at his hands, the destruction of his power, issuing in their liberation, is represented as a justification of their character.

11, 12. The Chaldeans are ironically summoned to use all possible means for the defence of Babylon. Medes is here used as a general name for both Medes and Persians. Strictly taken, they were superior to the latter in political and military importance.

13. צְדִיקָה is the feminine Participle with the Yod paragogic. צָדִיק, properly



- 14 Jehovah of Hosts hath sworn by himself,  
That surely I will fill thee with men like locusts,  
And they shall raise the battle-shout against thee.
- 15 He made the earth by his power,  
He established the world by his wisdom,  
And stretched forth the heavens by his understanding.
- 16 When there is thunder,  
He causeth abundance of water in the heavens,  
And maketh the vapours to ascend  
From the ends of the earth :  
He maketh the lightnings with rain,  
And bringeth out the wind from his stores.
- 17 Every man is rendered brutish by his art,  
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image ;  
For his molten images are a lie,  
And there is no breath in them.
- 18 They are vanity, the work of delusions ;  
In the time of their visitation they shall perish.
- 19 The Portion of Jacob is not like these ;  
For he is the Former of the universe,  
And Israel is the Rod of his inheritance ;  
Jehovah of Hosts is his name.
- 20 Thou hast been my war-club, my weapons of war ;  
With thee I have broken nations in pieces,  
And with thee I have destroyed kingdoms.
- 21 With thee I have broken in pieces the horse and his rider,  
And with thee I have broken in pieces the chariot and its rider.
- 22 With thee I have broken in pieces the husband and the wife,  
And with thee I have broken in pieces the aged and the young ;  
With thee also I have broken in pieces the youth and the maid.

a cubit, is here used indefinitely for measure generally.

15—19. These verses are verbally a repetition of chap. x. 12—16. The only diversity is the omission of *אֶל־יְהוָה* in verse 19, which omission is supplied in twenty-three MSS. and has been originally in four more. It is in two more by correction, and is expressed in the Targ., Vulg., and the Pachom. MS. of the LXX.

20—23. An address to Babylon, which though, in point of style, it may seem to trail, is designed, by an accumulation of particulars, to bring out more prominently the universal destruction effected by the conquests of that power. That the Preterite should here be taken strictly of that tense, and not be converted into the Future, as is done in the ancient versions, and by Hitzig and Ewald, the connexion requires. The application of

- 23 With thee I have broken in pieces the shepherd and his flock,  
And with thee I have broken in pieces the ploughman and  
his team;  
With thee also I have broken in pieces the satraps and the  
governors.
- 24 And I have repaid Babylon, and all the inhabitants of Chaldea,  
For all their injury which they have done to Zion in your sight,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 25 Behold ! I am against thee, O destroying mountain !  
Saith Jehovah,  
Which destroyest the whole earth :  
And I will stretch out my hand over thee,  
And roll thee down from the rocks,  
And make thee a burnt mountain.
- 26 And men shall not take of thee a stone for a corner,  
Nor a stone for foundations ;  
But thou shalt be desolate for ever,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 27 Raise the banner in the earth,  
Blow the trumpet among the nations,  
Consecrate the nations against her,  
Summon against her  
The kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz ;  
Appoint a military commander against her.

the words to Cyrus would be out of place.—*שָׁחַץ*, from *שָׁחַץ* to scatter, break, dash in pieces, designates the club anciently used by warriors for the purpose of clearing away all with whom they came in contact. Comp. l. 23, and Nahum ii. 2.

24. The change from the second person to the third, as well as the turn given to the announcement, requires the Preterite here to be taken as the prophetic Future, and rendered accordingly. The persons addressed in *עֵינֶיךָ*, "your eyes," were the Jews, many of whom had witnessed the ruthless conduct of the Chaldeans at the capture of Jerusalem.

25, 26. The prophet now changes the metaphor of a war-club for that of a volcano, which, pouring forth floods of lava, spreads destruction over all the surround-

ing country. For the same image, comp. Rev. viii. 8. It sometimes happens that volcanic mountains, after having spent themselves, fall into the vacuum; and nothing but the surrounding rocks are left to mark where the craters had been. The walls of Babylon, which were 360 feet in height, not inaptly suggested the idea of a mountain, and their rugged appearance after the destruction of the city, that of an extinct volcano. As volcanic stones and pumice are unfit for use in the construction of buildings, and are left where they have been deposited, so Babylon should never rise from its ruins. No prince or governor should ever be appointed from among her inhabitants.

27, 28. The nations of western Asia are summoned to join the Medes in the attack on Babylon. By *אַרָּרָט*, ARARAT,

- Cause cavalry to come up  
Like bristled locusts.
- 28 Consecrate the nations against her,  
The kings of Media,  
Her satraps and her governors,  
And all the land of their dominion.
- 29 And the earth shall quake, and be in pain,  
For the purposes of Jehovah against Babylon shall stand,  
To make the land of Babylon desolate  
Without an inhabitant.
- 30 The heroes of Babylon cease to fight,  
They remain in their strongholds,  
Their strength faileth,  
They are become women ;  
Her dwellings are burned,  
Her barriers are broken in pieces.
- 31 Courier runneth to meet courier,  
And messenger to meet messenger,  
To announce to the king of Babylon,  
That his city is altogether taken :

are meant the regions in the vicinity of that mountain, forming some of the most fertile and beautiful parts of Armenia. מִיִּי, MINNI, a province of the same country, from which in all probability it takes its name. According to Major Rawlinson, Van was the capital of this province. The country was conquered by Tetarrassa, the general of Temembar II., the Assyrian king whose wars are commemorated on the black obelisk, now in the British Museum. אַדִּיָּבֶנֶה, has been variously interpreted. Targ. אַדִּיָּבֶנֶה, *Adiabene*. The Arab. الحوزيين *the Chozars*. Bochart. *Ascania*, from places of that name in Phrygia or Bithynia. Comp. Iliad, book ii. 862 :

Φόρκυσ αὖ Φρύγας ἦγε καὶ Ἀσκανίους  
θεοειδής

τῇλ' ἐξ Ἀσκανίης.

The modern Jews preposterously understand Germany. If not also a province of Armenia, it no doubt bordered on that country. Cyrus had subdued the terri-

ories of Asia Minor before he marched against Babylon, and consequently augmented his forces by levies from that quarter. See *Cyropæd.* books iii. and iv. מְסִיר, occurs only ver. 27, and in the plural, Nahum iii. 17, which sec. מְסִיר, *bristling*, from סָרַר, *to stand erect*, or bristle as the hair.

28. Some have thought that מְלִכֵי מִדְּיָה, *kings of Media*, are to be taken as of the Dual number, and that Cyaxares and Cyrus are intended ; but as the phrase stands in immediate connexion with נָא, *the nations*, I prefer applying it to the tributary kings subject to the Medes. The suffix in מְסִירָם, points to the proper king of Media.

29. For מְסִירָם, fifteen MSS. read מְסִירָה, in the singular ; and thus the Vulg. and both the Syriac versions.

31. The couriers or messengers were those who were despatched from different parts of the city to convey the unexpected intelligence of the breaches made by the enemy.

- 32 That the passages are captured,  
That the stockades are burned with fire,  
And the military thrown into confusion.
- 33 For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel,  
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor,  
At the time when it is trodden :  
Yet a little while,  
And the time of harvest shall come to her.
- 34 Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me,  
He hath discomfited me,  
He hath made me an empty vessel,  
He hath swallowed me up like a sea-monster,  
He hath filled his belly with my delicacies :  
He hath cast me out.
- 35 The violence done to me and to my flesh be on Babylon,  
Shall the inhabitress of Zion say :  
And, Let my blood be on the inhabitants of Chaldea,  
Shall Jerusalem say.
- 36 Therefore, thus saith Jehovah,  
Behold ! I will plead thy cause,  
And will execute vengeance for thee ;

32. On the ground of its being difficult to conceive of the burning of *pools* with fire, Blayney proposes to read *אלימים*, *vestibules* or *porches* instead of *אנמים*. This latter word, however, which is found in all the MSS. and is supported by the versions, is here used in the same acceptation as *אנמים*, viz. *reeds* or *canes*, such as grow around lakes or pools of stagnant water; and as such are often of considerable strength, so as to admit of their being made into stockades, it is most probable that these defences or outworks are here meant. Thus Rabbi Jona, comparing the cognate Arabic *أجمة*, *muni-menta*, *arces*.

33. The circumstance, that the time of treading out the corn is mentioned before that of the harvest, instead of after it, as might have been expected, may be accounted for on the principle, that the prophet wished to give greater prominence to his announcement of

the completeness of the destruction that should come upon Babylon.

34, 35. The Jews are here introduced, complaining of the injuries inflicted upon them by the Chaldeans, and imprecating divine retribution. For the five instances of the plural suffix in these verses, the singular of the Keri is found in not a few MSS. and in the Soncín. and Brix. edd. and is the Masoretic punctuation. It is also the reading supported by all the ancient versions, and agrees with the singular affix to the nouns. By *שׁמִר*, *my flesh*, we are here to understand the blood-relations of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or the Jews throughout the country, who were killed or carried captive to Babylon.

36. The Orientals are accustomed to call any great collection of waters, a sea. Thus in Arab. *بحر النيل*, *the sea of the Nile*, for the Nile itself, and simply *البحر*,

- For I will dry up her sea,  
And make her spring dry.
- 37 And Babylon shall become heaps,  
An abode of jackals :  
An object of astonishment and derision,  
Without an inhabitant.
- 38 They roar together like lions,  
They roar like young lions.
- 39 When they are heated I will make their banquets,  
And intoxicate them,  
In order that they may exult,  
And sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake :  
Saith Jehovah.
- 40 I will make them go down like lambs to the slaughter,  
Like rams and he-goats.
- 41 How Sheshak is taken !  
The praise of all the earth captured !  
How Babylon is become desolate among the nations !
- 42 The sea hath come up over Babylon,  
She is covered with the multitude of its waves.
- 43 Her cities have become a desert,  
An arid land, and a steppe ;  
A land in which no one dwelleth,  
And through which no son of man passeth.
- 44 For I will punish Bel in Babylon,  
And I will take out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed,

*the sea.* See on Is. xix. 5. The prediction was literally fulfilled in the well-known fact of the drawing off of the Euphrates by Cyrus.

38, 39. The night in which the conquest of Babylon was effected, was during the great festival which had been instituted in honour of the idols, and at which revelry of every description was indulged in to such a pitch, that most of the inhabitants were more or less in a state of inebriation.

41. For *Sheshak*, see on chap. xxv. 26.

42. The image of the inundation of a river, to represent the invasion of a country by a large and powerful army, is not uncommon in the prophets. See

Is. viii. 7 ; xvii. 12, 13. To interpret the words literally of the Euphrates, as Michaelis does, is quite repugnant to the spirit of the passage.

43. The plural *עָרָיו*, though occurring in immediate connexion with *עָרָא*, in the singular, is doubtless intended to comprehend the cities specified at the beginning of the verse.

44. In *עֲלֵי־בֵל* is obviously a paronomasia. For Belus, the principal god of the Babylonians, see on Is. xlvi. 1. Though there may be a reference here to the numerous sacrifices which were offered to this idol, and which the priests pretended he devoured during the night, yet what the prophet strictly

And the nations shall flow to him no more ;  
The wall of Babylon is fallen down.

45 Come out of the midst of her, O my people !

And let every one save his own life,  
From the fury of the anger of Jehovah.

46 And let not your heart be timid,  
Neither be ye afraid at the report,  
Which shall be heard in the land ;  
For this year a report shall come,  
And the following year another report,  
Violence in the land,  
And ruler against ruler.

47 Therefore the days are coming  
When I will punish the graven images of Babylon,  
And her whole land shall be ashamed ;  
And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.

48 Then heaven and earth, and all that are in them,  
Shall rejoice over Babylon ;  
For the destroyers shall come against her from the north,  
Saith Jehovah.

49 Babylon also shall fall, O ye slain of Israel !

Those also of Babylon shall fall, O ye slain of all the earth !

has in view, is the abundance of treasure which had been taken from the conquered nations, and deposited in his temple, as well as that which had been voluntarily dedicated to him by the multitudes of pilgrims who resorted to his shrine. The long processions of pilgrims moving slowly along are fitly expressed by נָחַם, which properly signifies, *to flow as a river*. For the fulfilment of the prophecy, as it regards the restoration of the plundered vessels of the temple at Jerusalem, see Ezra i. 7—11.

45, 46. The prophet again turns to the Jews in Babylon, and urges them to make their escape from the city, lest they should be involved in its destruction—intimating to them, that in the course of the previous year they should hear of the approach of the Medo-Persian army, which would be a signal to them to retire into the country, in an opposite direction from that in which the invaders

might be expected to appear. נָחַם at the beginning of a sentence, has all the force of a prohibitory adverb. It is to be understood as if it were repeated before הִנֵּה. The conjunction וְ is found before נָחַם, as first occurring in נָחַם לִי נָחַם, in sixty-four MSS., and has been originally in ten more. It is likewise in thirteen printed editions, and is supported by Symm., the Targ., Syr., Vulg., and Arab. —נָחַם occurs anomalously in the masculine, though נָחַם, the subject, is previously introduced. It is an instance of *constructio ad sensum*.

47—49. The complete downfall of the city of Babylon with all her idols, including the cessation of the Chaldean empire, was an event of such importance, both in a civil and a religious point of view, that not only is universal nature represented as exulting at it, but the departed spirits of the multitudes slain in its wars are invoked to participate in

- 50 Ye that have escaped from the sword,  
Go on, stand not still:  
Remember Jehovah from afar,  
And let Jerusalem come into your mind.
- 51 We were ashamed, because we heard reproach,  
Confusion covered our face,  
Because foreigners had entered  
The holy places of the house of Jehovah.
- 52 Therefore, behold! the days come, saith Jehovah,  
When I will punish her graven images,  
And through all her land the wounded shall groan.
- 53 Though Babylon hath mounted up to heaven,  
And though she hath fortified the heights of her strength,  
Destroyers shall come from me against her,  
Saith Jehovah.
- 54 The sound of an outcry from Babylon,  
And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans.
- 55 For Jehovah is destroying Babylon,  
And causing the great sound to perish from her;  
Her waves raged like mighty waters,  
The noise of their sound was given forth.
- 56 For a destroyer is come against Babylon,  
And her heroes shall be taken,  
Their bows shall be broken:  
For Jehovah is a God of retributions,  
He will render full recompence.

the joy. The signification of *slayers*, i.e. soldiers, which Kennicott and some others have given to מַלְאָכִים, ver. 49, is not supported by Hebrew usage.

50—52. Though the Jews had been reproached by idolaters as abandoned by Jehovah, as if he had not been able to save them, and they could not contradict the fact that they had been abandoned by him, yet they are assured that he would prove himself to be mightier than all the gods of Babylon, whose devotees should fall throughout the empire. The plural מִקְדָּשִׁים, *sanctuaries*, ver. 51, is expressive of the several compartments of the temple.

53—58. Exalted as Babylon had been

by her military prowess, her wealth, and her celebrated idol-gods, she was now to be reduced to utter desolation. The noise made by her inhabitants and her numerous armies, was now to be exchanged for that of her destruction. According to Herodotus, the walls of Babylon were sixty miles in circumference, and three hundred and fifty feet in height. They formed a square, in each side of which were twenty-five gates leading into the city. Between these gates were two hundred and fifty towers, so that it was considered to be impregnable. Berosus states that Cyrus ordered the outer walls to be pulled down; and the rest were reduced by

- 57 And I will intoxicate her princes and her sages,  
 Her satraps and her military governors and her heroes,  
 And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep,  
 And shall not awake,  
 Saith Jehovah.
- 58 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts;  
 The walls of spacious Babylon  
 Shall be utterly demolished,  
 And her lofty gates shall be burned with fire;  
 So that the people shall have laboured for mere vanity,  
 And the tribes for the very fire, and been wearied.
- 59 The thing which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah  
 the son of Neraiah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went with  
 Zedekiah, king of Judah, to Babylon, in the fourth year of  
 60 his reign: Now Seraiah was a quiet prince. And Jeremiah  
 described all the calamity which should come on Babylon, in  
 a book—all these words which are written against Babylon.
- 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon,  
 62 and shalt see, and shalt read all these words, Then thou shalt  
 say, O Jehovah! Thou hast spoken against this place to  
 destroy it, that there should be no inhabitant in it, neither

Darius to the height of fifteen cubits. For constructing these works Semiramis is said to have brought to Babylon two millions of men: but in the view of their demolition the prophet declares that all their labour should terminate in conflagration and emptiness. For the force of וְיָ, see Gesenius's Lexicon in וְיָ. With the exception that וְיָ and וְיָ have exchanged places, the two concluding lines of ver. 58 are found in Habak. ii. 13, where the same subject is predicted, and from which Jeremiah appears to have borrowed them.

59—64. These verses, which form an epilogue to the preceding prophecy against Babylon, bear unequivocal marks of genuineness, and are not to be regarded as the composition of a later writer. A special copy of the prophecy, prepared by Jeremiah, was delivered to Seraiah, to furnish the Jews in Babylon with matter of consolation in their state of exile. Though, on his arrival within sight of Babylon, he was to bind a stone

to it, and throw it into the Euphrates, accompanying the symbolical act with an inspired prediction, it is not to be supposed that he could forget the contents of the document; so that though it might not have been safe for him to retain it in his possession, he might communicate the substance orally to his countrymen, as occasion served.

59. As Zedekiah did not go to Babylon till he was carried thither captive in the eleventh year of his reign, it is obvious that the particle וְיָ before his name in this verse, is not to be taken in the sense of *with*, but elliptically for מִיָּדָה, *from with*, i.e. *from*, with special reference to the monarch from whom Seraiah received his commission. Comp. for similar ellipses of the preposition, Gen. iv. 1; xlv. 4; 2 Kings xxiii. 35. וְיָ has been variously rendered. The Vulgate strangely: *principes prophetie*. The LXX. ἀρχαῖς δεσπῶν, as if they had read וְיָ; and this is likewise given in the Targum: רַבְרָבֵי מַלְאָכֵי



- 63 man nor beast, but that it should be desolate for ever. And it shall be when thou hast finished reading this book, thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the
- 64 Euphrates: And shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the calamity which I bring upon her, so that they shall have been wearied. Thus far the words of Jeremiah.

supposing the office of Seraiah to be that of the distributor of the royal presents. Michaelis, Scholz, Maurer, and Hitzig, interpret the title as denoting the *chief*, or *commander of the caravan*, on whom, according to Oriental custom, it devolved to appoint the resting-place for the night. Cahen: *chef des agents de sûreté*: i.e. master of police, whose office it was to maintain tranquillity in the city, or the palace. Others, *lord chamberlain*, an office of high consideration and confidence. But the most probable meaning is that given in our common version: *a quiet prince*. Comp. *אִישׁ שְׁקֵטָה*, *a man of quietness*, 1 Chron. xxii. 9. Seraiah was a prince of a peaceable disposition—not hostile to Jeremiah, but one who might be safely

trusted with the commission given him by the prophet.

64. It seems scarcely possible to account for *וַיִּשָּׂא*, so that they shall have been wearied, on any other ground than that some copyist has inadvertently inserted the word from the end of ver. 58. It is, however, found in all the MSS., and in the versions of Aquila, Symm., the Hexap. Syr., the Vulg., the Peschito, and the Targ. The LXX. conclude the chapter with the preceding words.

The additional note, *Thus far the words of Jeremiah*, is in all probability to be ascribed to the person who collected the sacred writings of the Old Testament, and who added the following chapter to the book written by our prophet.

## CHAPTER LII.

By whom this chapter was penned, has been matter of dispute, and it may safely be asserted that it is a question which never will be determined. The hypothesis, that Jeremiah himself was the writer, appears to have originated, either in the opinion that he was the author of the Book of Kings, between a portion of which (2 Kings xxiv. 18—xxv. 1—21,) and this chapter, 1—27, there is an almost verbal identity; or, that he composed it to serve as an historical account of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, to be prefixed to the Book of Lamentations, which celebrates that disastrous event. If, however, any credit is to be given to the statement made chap. li. 64, *וַיִּשָּׂא יֵרֵמְיָהוּ*, *Thus far the words of Jeremiah*, all that our prophet had composed terminated with the foregoing words of that verse, and the reader is palpably left to infer, that what follows was supplied by the writer of that annotation. Although it is impossible to ascertain the time at which the additional chapter was received into the canon, yet so much is beyond dispute, that it must have formed part of that canon in the time of our Lord and his Apostles, forasmuch as it is found in the version of the LXX., and there is no reason whatever to believe that it could by any

possibility have been translated from that version, and added to the Hebrew text at a later period. Bertholdt, indeed, maintains positively that it must have existed in the book previously to the completion of the canon, since we have no instance of any extraneous portion having been added subsequently to that event. This chapter contains certain particulars relative to Zedekiah, 1—3; the siege and capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the removal of the valuable appurtenances of the temple to Babylon, the disposal of the leading men among the Jews, and of the lower orders of the community, 4—30; and the kind treatment which Jehoiachin, who had previously been transported to Babylon, 31—34, received from Evil-merodach.

- 1 ZEDEKIAH was twenty-one years old when he came to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.
- 2 And he did that which was wicked in the sight of Jehovah,
- 3 according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For it was through the anger of Jehovah against Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them away from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.
- 4 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came, he and all his force, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it, and built watch-towers
- 5 against it round about. So the city was in a state of siege
- 6 till the eleventh year of Zedekiah. In the fourth month, on the ninth of the month, the famine was grievous in the city,
- 7 and there was no bread for the country-people. And the city was broken in upon, and all the military fled and went out of the city by night, in the direction of the gate, between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; for the Chaldeans were all around the city: and they went out in

3. מִצִּיּוֹן is omitted in one or two MSS., the Syr., Vulg., and the Arab. of the Oxford Codex; but it occurs in 2 Kings xxiv. 20, where there is no variety of reading. The word expresses more forcibly the immediate connexion between the judgment inflicted on Jerusalem and the Divine displeasure with the sins of the inhabitants.

4. מִצִּיּוֹן is to be taken collectively, and is not to be rendered by *forts*, but *watch-towers*; from מִצִּיּוֹן, *to look out, look about,*

*observe*—a signification which the verb has in Aramaic. Gesenius, who formerly approved of *walls, circumvallations*, proposed by Michaelis, has at last adopted the above interpretation. The towers were erected by the besieging party for the double purpose of observing what was done by those who defended the city, and of annoying them by discharging missiles upon them from the elevation which was thus afforded.

7. Comp. on chap. xxxix. 4.

- 8 the direction of the steppe. And the Chaldean force pursued the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the steppes of  
 9 Jericho, and all his force dispersed from him. And they took the king and brought him to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, in the land of Hamath, and he pronounced judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon butchered the sons of  
 10 Zedekiah in his sight; and all the princes of Judah also he butchered at Riblah. And he dug out the eyes of Zedekiah,  
 11 and bound him with fetters of brass, and the king of Babylon brought him to Babylon, and he put him in a house of custody till the day of his death.
- 12 And in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month, which was in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, captain of the body-guard, who stood before  
 13 the king of Babylon, came into Jerusalem, and burned the temple of Jehovah, and the palace of the king; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great, he  
 14 burned with fire. And all the Chaldean force which was with the captain of the body-guard, demolished all the walls of Jerusalem round about. And some of the poor of the  
 15 people, and the rest of the people that were left in the city, and those who went over to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the  
 16 body-guard, carried away captive. But some of the poor of the land Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, left  
 17 for vine-dressers and for ploughmen. And the pillars of

11. *בֵּיתֵי הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים*, the house of visitations, or punishments, the LXX. render *oikíav μύλωνος*, the house of the mill, with special reference to the custom of prisoners' being condemned to work at the mill. Thus Samson, after his eyes had been put out by the Philistines, ground in the prison-house, Judges xvi. 21.

12. The discrepancy between the *tenth* day and the *seventh*, 2 Kings xxv. 8, may be accounted for on the assumption that the Hebrews used letters as numerals, and that one has been mistaken for another by a transcriber. There are more discrepancies of the same kind

between the two chapters, in all probability owing to a similar cause.

13. *וְנִבְזַרְאֲדָן* is of unusual construction. It seems to stand for *נִבְזַרְאֲדָן וְנִבְזַרְאֲדָן*. In 2 Kings xxv. 9, the article is omitted before *נִבְזַרְאֲדָן*. Both the substantive and the adjective are to be taken collectively, and rendered in the plural.

15. The poor of the people here spoken of were those of the city, as distinguished from those of the country at the beginning of the following verse. There is, therefore, no sufficient reason why the words *הָעָם הַנִּשְׁתָּרֵם* should be rejected, though they are omitted in one MS. and in 2 Kings.

copper, which were in the temple of Jehovah, and the bases, and the copper sea which was in the temple of Jehovah, the Chaldeans brake in pieces; and they carried  
 18 away all the copper of them to Babylon, And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and all the vessels of copper, with which service was per-  
 19 formed, they took away. And the dishes, and the pans, and the basons, and the pots, and the lamp-stands, and the spoons, and the bowls, the gold of that which was gold, and the silver of that which was silver, the captain of the body-  
 20 guard took away. The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve copper oxen which were underneath, and the bases which king Solomon had made for the temple of Jehovah—  
 21 there was no weight to the copper of all these vessels. And as for the pillars, eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded it; and its  
 22 thickness was four fingers; it was hollow. And the chapter on it was copper, and the height of the one chapter was five cubits with network, and pomegranates on the chapter round about, all of copper; and the second pillar and the  
 23 pomegranates were like these. And the pomegranates were ninety-six towards the wind; all the pomegranates were a  
 24 hundred on the lattice-work round about. And the captain of the body-guard took Seraiah the chief-priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door.  
 25 And from the city he took an eunuch who had been appointed over the military, and seven men of those who had been in attendance on the king, that were found in the city, and the secretary of the commander-in-chief, who enrolled the people for service, and sixty men of the country-people  
 26 who were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan, the captain of the body-guard, took them, and brought them

20. As, according to the description 1 Kings vii. the כְּבִלֹת, *bases*, were not under the oxen which supported the molten sea, but formed the supports of the ten lavers, כְּבִלֹת must be taken in reference to עֲמֻדָּה, as interpreted by the LXX. ὑποκάτω τῆς θαλάσσης, and not

joined to כְּבִלֹת following. By supplying the conjunction ו, according to the reading in 2 Kings xxv. 16, no difficulty will remain.

23. הָרוּחַ, *towards the air or wind*, i.e. the outside of the capitals of the columns or pillars.

- 27 to the king of Babylon at Riblah. And the king of Babylon smote them, and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he took Judah away captive from his land.
- 28 This is the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, of Jews three thousand, twenty and
- 29 three. In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, of the
- 30 men of Jerusalem eight hundred, thirty and two. In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the body-guard carried away captive of Jews seven hundred, forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.
- 31 And it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the fifteenth of the month, that Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin,
- 32 king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison. And spake kindly to him, and placed his throne above the thrones
- 33 of the kings which were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and he ate bread before him
- 34 all the days of his life: And as for his diet, a constant diet

28—30. These verses are omitted in 2 Kings xxv. and in the LXX. According to 2 Kings xxiv. 14, the number of captives taken along with Jehoiachin amounted to 10,000, with which the statement here made, that the number was 3,023, may be reconciled, by comparing 2 Kings xxiv. 16, where we are informed that 7,000 of the 10,000 specified ver. 14 were military, leaving the sum total to be completed by the addition of the round number of 3,000, which our author, giving the exact number of 3,023, states to have been Jews, understanding thereby the inhabitants, exclusive of the soldiers. To the number of 4,000, specified in ver. 30 before us as the amount of those who had been taken captive at three different times, must be added the 7,000 soldiers of 2 Kings xxiv. 14, so that the whole will come to 11,000; and regarding these as full-grown men, if we take into the account the women and children, the total estimate of those carried away to

Babylon will be, according to the computation of Michaelis, about 50,000 individuals.

31—34. Though, as the author just mentioned shows, Jeremiah might have lived long enough to have appended this account of the favourable change of circumstances in the history of Jehoiachin, there seems to be no weight in the argument, that, if he had not written it, mention would have been made of the death of the prophet, as an event of greater interest to the reader than what happened to the captive king. It is much more natural to suppose that the mind of the writer, assuming that he was another person, would be occupied with the fate of his compatriots, and especially of the Jewish kings, in Babylon—the captivity there being the subject of which he was treating,—than that he should re-introduce Jeremiah, whose history had been dropped at chap. li. 61. Evil-merodach was the son and successor of

was given to him from the king of Babylon, every day its portion, till the day of his death, all the days of his life.

Nebuchadnezzar; according to Jewish tradition, he had been thrown into prison by his father for some misdemeanour in the government during the period of Nebuchadnezzar's monomania; and while there he contracted a personal friendship with Jehoiachin; so that, on his ascend-

ing the throne, he not only released him, but advanced him to the most distinguished seat at the royal table. The position maintained by Marsham, Hupfeld and Hofmann, that he was identical with Belshazzar, is untenable. That monarch was unquestionably Nabonned.

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THE  
LAMENTATIONS.





## INTRODUCTION.

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THOUGH the elegies of Jeremiah have their place awkwardly assigned them in the Hebrew Bible among the Chethuvim, between the books of Ruth and Ecclesiastes, there can be little doubt that, originally, they immediately followed, or formed the concluding part of the Book of that prophet. On this hypothesis alone can we account for the enumeration of the prophetical books by Josephus, in his book against Apion, which he states to be *thirteen*. To make up this number he must have reckoned Jeremiah and Lamentations as one book, just as he must have classed together and reckoned as one each of the following pairs: Judges and Ruth; the two books of Samuel; the two books of Kings; the two books of Chronicles; and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Nor is it otherwise than natural that these elegies should follow immediately after the description of the disastrous circumstances connected with the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which obviously form the subject that they so dolorously depict.

As, indeed, specific mention is made, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, of lamentations having been composed by Jeremiah, on occasion of the death of Josiah, and of their not only having been made an ordinance to be perpetuated by recitation in Israel, but also of their having been *written in the lamentations*, the opinion was entertained by Josephus, by Jerome, and others of the Fathers, and was adopted by Usher, Michaelis, and Dathe, as it has been by some others of the moderns, that they are contained in the collection before us.\* But,—not to insist on the fact, that though the Jews now sometimes give the name of קְנוֹת, *lamentations*, to the book

\* Though Michaelis contended for this opinion in his Commentary, yet he afterwards rejected it in his *Neuen Orient. u. Exeg. Bibliothek*. I. p. 106; and Dathe did the same in the second edition of his Translation.

of elegies which we thus designate, yet the current title of the collection is *איכה*, *how*, the first word of the book having been adopted as the title, agreeably to a custom which obtained among the Jews with respect to the Pentateuch and some other books of the Hebrew Scriptures,—nothing can more convincingly prove that the collection refers to Jerusalem, and not to Josiah, than the circumstances that the former is repeatedly mentioned, either expressly by name, or by equivalent circumlocutory epithets; and that a great variety of metaphors are employed, which can be justified only on the supposition that the destruction of the city, as the type and representative of the Jewish state, the miserable condition to which the inhabitants were reduced during the siege, and their transportation to Babylon, formed the scenes which the prophet had in his eye; none of which apply to the time of Josiah. The only supposable reference to a king, is Elegy iv. 20; but this reference is exclusively applicable to Zedekiah, since the Jews could have had no anticipation of living among the heathen in connexion with the reign of Josiah, whereas, when Zedekiah was conveyed by the king of Babylon to Riblah, they might have expected, that, if they should be carried with him to Babylon, and if he should be treated as Jehoiachin had been, they might have favour shown them for his sake. Besides, it is quite impossible to imagine, how Jeremiah could have composed such elegies as those before us on account of Josiah, without expatiating on the singular piety of that monarch, and the melancholy circumstances of his death.

That the traditionary reference at the time the version of the LXX. was made, supports the hypothesis which represents the destruction of Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah as being the subject of the Lamentations, appears from the introductory verse prefixed by these translators, which reads as follows: “καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὸ αἰχμαλωτισθῆναι τὸν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐρημωθῆναι, ἐκάθισεν Ἱερεμίας, κλαίων, καὶ ἐθρήνησε τὸν θρήνον τοῦτον ἐπὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ, καὶ εἶπε”—“And it came to pass after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem had been laid waste, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation, and said.”

In point of style, the Elegies of Jeremiah hold a middle place between the simple elevation of prophetic poetry, and the more

elevated rhythmical movement which we find in the songs of Moses, David, and Habakkuk. It is impossible in a translation to exhibit anything like that conciseness and brevity by which the Hebrew original, notwithstanding all the diffuseness of style characteristic of the prophet, is so strongly marked. The imagery is tender and pathetic, and bursts at times into violence, manifesting all the characteristics of elegiac poetry. The elegiac effusions are grouped in stanzas as they arose in the mind of Jeremiah, without exhibiting, for the most part, any special connexion, which will account for the absence of artificial and methodical arrangement.\*

The principal characteristic of these Elegies, the last excepted, is that they are acrostic or alphabetical. Each Elegy is divided into twenty-two stanzas or verses. In the three first they all consist of triplets, each beginning with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in regular order. In three instances, viz. Eleg. ii. 16, 17; iii. 46—51; iv. 16, 17, the letters have been transposed. The third elegy has this remarkable feature, that each line of the three forming the stanza begins with the same letter of the alphabet. The fourth is distinguished from all the others by each stanza consisting only of two lines; while the last, though exhibiting stanzas of three lines each, and, like the rest, consisting of twenty-two—the number of letters in the alphabet,—is not alphabetical. It likewise differs in the lines being shorter than those of which the others are composed. With this exception, the lines are longer than we find in any other specimens of Hebrew poetry. They contain, on an average, twelve syllables, and are perceptibly marked by a cæsura about the middle, so as to divide them into two somewhat unequal parts.

It has been justly remarked that a greater variety of beautiful, tender, and pathetic images, all expressive of deep distress and sorrow, were never more happily chosen and applied, than in these incomparable Elegies of Jeremiah.†

\* Lowth's Lecture XXII.

† Dr. John Smith's "Summary View and Explanation of the Writings of the Prophets."



# LAMENTATIONS.

## ELEGY I.

Contemplating the sad reverse of circumstances which the Jews had experienced, Jeremiah at once breaks out in utterances of the most profound grief over the fate of Jerusalem. He mixes up his graphic description of the miseries which her inhabitants had had inflicted upon them, with her own personified description of her calamities, her confession of her crimes as their cause, her justification of Jehovah in her punishment, and her hope that the time would come when the conduct of her enemies should meet with condign retribution.

- ⌘ 1 How she sitteth solitary—the populous city !  
She is a widow that was great among the nations !  
She that was princess among the provinces is become tributary !  
⌘ 2 She weepeth sorely in the night, and her tears are on her checks ;

1. The Yod in יָדָהּ and שָׁדָהּ is merely paragogic, but appears originally to have been used as a mark of the genitive case, just as the corresponding letter is in Arabic. It only occurs in Hebrew poetry, or the higher style of composition, and in compound names of ancient times, as מִיָּדָהּ, מִשָּׁדָהּ, &c. It is impossible to determine what was the extent of the population of ancient Jerusalem. Before the revolt under Rehoboam it must have been very great, especially during the celebration of the three annual festivals, when the males congregated there from all parts of the country ; and even after that event there is reason to believe that, as the metropolis of the southern kingdom, the number of inhabitants was considerable. It not only continued to be the resort of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but was one of the principal mercantile cities of the East. The present population of the city does not

exceed 12,000. In the prosperous times of the Hebrew monarchy it exercised authority over all the countries from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates ; but now, when this elegy was composed, its king having been removed, and itself being deprived of the favour of its theocratic Head, it is represented as reduced to the circumstances of solitary widowhood. The בְּיָלָמָהּ is simply that of comparison, and is not intended to express any hope that she would be restored from her widowed state, as Jarchi fancifully supposes. It is impossible to read this verse without thinking of *Judea Capta*, or the representation of the conquered Jewish state under the emblem of a disconsolate female sitting under a palm-tree, which was struck on a medal on the taking of Jerusalem by Titus.

2. The infinitive absolute in תִּכְדֹּהּ is expressive of intensity, as it generally

There is no comforter for her of all her lovers :

All her friends have acted falsely by her ; they are become her enemies.

2 3 Judah hath gone into captivity because of oppression, and because of much servitude.

She dwelleth among the heathen ; she findeth no rest ;

All her pursuers have overtaken her between the straits.

7 4 The ways of Zion mourn because none come to the festivals ;

All her gates are desolate ; her priests sigh ;

Her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

7 5 Her adversaries are become the chief, her enemies prosper ;

Because Jehovah hath afflicted her for the multitude of her rebellions :

Her children are gone captives before the enemy.

is when it stands before a finite verb. The phrase is, therefore, to be rendered, "she weepeth *sorely*," and not *continually*, as Blayney prefers. נָכַח stands for נָכַח, by a common permutation of the letters. To express the more aggravated character of the weeping, it is represented as indulged in even during the night—the period of rest and quiet. The אֲדָמָה, *lovers*, and רֵעִים, *friends*, were those neighbouring states which were allies of the Hebrews, who were accustomed to rely on their assistance in case of any hostile attack, and their idol-gods which they worshipped, and in which they trusted. Egypt especially was the object of their confidence, but not even she durst venture to come to their help against the Chaldeans. See Ezck. xxix. 6, 7, 16. Those in the more immediate vicinity actually joined the northern enemy on his irruption into the country. 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

3. Interpreters have differed with respect to what we are to understand by the "oppression and much servitude" mentioned in this verse : some supposing it to be that which the Jews experienced from the Chaldeans ; and others, that which was inflicted by the Jews upon their brethren. To the former view it may justly be objected, that it does not make the two parts of the line to cohere ; since, on such supposition, the evils must have been the effect and not the cause

of the exile. I cannot, therefore, but think, that the reference is to the circumstances narrated chap. xxxiv., in which the Jews are expressly threatened with captivity, because, in violation of the Mosaic law, and of the covenant into which they had entered, they withdrew the grant of liberty which they had made to their servants, and reduced them to their former state of servitude. From the use of the qualifying term רַב, *much*, or *great*, it may be inferred that the circumstances of these servants had been rendered worse than they had been before. The "straits" were the narrow passes in the mountainous parts of the country, in which it would be easy to arrest the progress of the fugitives. Such localities in the East are frequently infested by robbers, who lie in wait for, and attack such travellers as may venture to urge their way through them.

4. Instead of the joyous festival-scenes exhibited at Jerusalem in the time of her prosperity, when all the roads leading thither were thronged with passengers, all was now desolation and woe. Comp. Jer. xiv. 2. The introduction of the metropolis herself at the end of the verse is inimitably beautiful.

5. All the attempts made by the enemies of God's people to distress them, must have proved unsuccessful, had he not delivered them into their hand to be punished for their iniquities. To these,

- ¶ 6 And there hath gone forth from the daughter of Zion all her splendour.  
Her princes are as harts that find no pasture,  
And go powerless before the pursuer.
- ¶ 7 Jerusalem remembers in the days of her affliction, and her persecution,  
All her precious things which were from ancient days:  
When her people fell into the hand of the adversary, and she had no helper.  
The adversaries saw her; they laughed at her ruin.
- ¶ 8 Jerusalem hath committed great sin, therefore she hath become unclean;  
All who honoured her despise her, because they see her nakedness:  
She also sigheth, and turneth backward.
- ¶ 9 Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembered not her latter end,

as the cause of their calamities, the prophet here distinctly points. In the representations which we find on ancient sculptures nothing is more affecting than to observe females and young children driven as captives before their conquerors.

6. For קרנָה the Keri and some MSS. read more correctly קרנָה. The phrase is also thus quoted in the Rabboth. Jerusalem had been renowned for the magnificence of the temple, and her other buildings: these the Chaldeans had stripped and burned with fire, and had carried into exile the most distinguished of her inhabitants.

7. The bitterest ingredient in the cup of adversity is the remembrance of lost possessions and enjoyments. In יָסִי there is an ellipsis of יָ, of which there are numerous examples. For יָסִי, *persecutions*, see my Comment. on Isaiah lviii. 7; LXX. ἀπωσμων. As each verse in this Elegy, except the present, contains regularly three lines, it has been supposed by some critics, that the words יָסִי, יָסִי, יָסִי, which here form a fourth line, have been added by some transcriber. Since, however, they are found in all the Hebrew MSS. and all

the ancient versions, it would be unwarrantable to omit them in translation. There is no reason to believe that Jeremiah considered himself so rigidly bound to adhere to his triple arrangement, as on no occasion to break through it, in order to give utterance to a thought forcibly bearing on the statement which he had just made. A similar addition occurs Elegy ii. 19.—יָסִי, *lit. her ruined circumstances*; the state of the complete cessation of all the active businesses of life. Root יָסַה, *to cease*; Hiph. *to put an end to, cause to cease*.

8. הָיָה חַטָּאתָהּ, the substantive repeated in the form of the verb, for the sake of emphasis; *she hath sinned a sin*: i. e. *she hath committed great sin*. Targ. חַטָּאתָהּ גְּדוּלָהּ, *she hath contracted great guilt*. To express the abomination in which the character of Jerusalem was held, in consequence of her having morally defiled herself by her indulgence in idolatry, she is said to have become נִדָּה, a term borrowed from the state of a female who is unclean by reason of the menses.

9. The prophet continues the revolting imagery which he had introduced in the preceding verse; and, after ascribing the fall of Jerusalem to heedless indulgence

Therefore she came down wonderfully; she hath no comforter:

Behold, O Jehovah! my affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself.

10 The adversary hath stretched forth his hand on all her precious things:

Surely she hath seen it, the heathen have entered her sanctuary,

Which thou commandedst that they should not enter into thy congregation.

11 All her people sigh, they seek bread;

They have given their precious things for food to restore life:

Look, O Jehovah! and regard; for I am vile.

12 Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass along the way?

Look and see if there be any sorrow like my sorrow which hath been inflicted upon me;

With which Jehovah hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

in sin, by a striking prosopopœia, he introduces her as imploring the compassionate regard of Jehovah. *וַיֵּאָמֶר*, *wonders*, used adverbially for *wonderfully*.

10. The *ה* in *וַיֵּאָמֶר* is merely the fuller form of the pronominal fragment for *וַיֵּאָמֶר*, the common form. It is omitted in some MSS. The legal restriction here referred to, is that which prohibited the Ammonites and Moabites from entering the temple, Deut. xxiii. 3. If even their entering to perform an act of worship would have been construed as a violation of the precept, how much more when it had for its object destruction and spoliation! By implication the Chaldeans, as an idolatrous people, were included in the prohibition.

11. Comp. Job ii. 4. *וַיִּחַדּוּ* is quite irregular. It is corrected in the Keri, which rejects the *י*. The word is thus exhibited in a great number of MSS., and in eight printed editions. Comp. ver. 10. The form *וַיִּחַדּוּ*, occurs ver. 7. *וַיִּחַדּוּ*, to cause the breath, or life to return; here, to support or refresh a person with food. This mode of expression is founded on the idea, that when one is faint, the breath or life is as it were gone.—It might be

supposed, that there is something incongruous in assigning her wiliness as a reason why God should regard Jerusalem; but there is reason to believe, that what is here meant, is not her moral pollution, but her abject and despised condition, which was exposed to all around her. *וַיִּחַדּוּ* is properly the Benoni Participle of *וַיִּחַדּוּ*, to shake, pour out, squander, act basely; hence, to be regarded and treated as a person deserves who thus acts.

12. *וַיִּחַדּוּ* is not to be considered as equivalent to *וַיִּחַדּוּ*, the interjection of wishing, but is a strong mode of expressing the negative *וַיִּחַדּוּ*, which has here all the force of a substantive put interrogatively, as it is in the common version: *Is it nothing?* The words of this verse have been very generally applied, in the language of the pulpit, to the sufferings of our Saviour, and unquestionably they graphically describe the intensity of those sufferings; but, considering the extent to which the original sense of the passage has been lost sight of, and the accommodated one substituted in its room, it would be well to notify that the secondary meaning is merely an accommodation of the words.



13 From on high he hath sent a fire into my bones, and it hath subdued them :

He hath spread a net for my feet ; he hath turned me back ;  
He hath made me desolate—languishing all day long

14 The yoke of my rebellions is bound by his hand, they are wreathed ;

They rise up on my neck ; the Lord hath made my strength to fail ;

He hath delivered me into the hands of those from whom I am unable to rise up.

15 The Lord hath cast away all my mighty men in the midst of me ;

He hath summoned an assembly against me, to break my young men in pieces :

The Lord hath trodden the wine-press as it respects the virgin-daughter of Judah.

16 For these things I weep, mine eye, mine eye floweth down with water ;

13—15. In these verses Jeremiah accumulates metaphor upon metaphor, in order more powerfully to affect the mind of the reader. The first is borrowed from a fact well established in osteology, that inflammation in the bones is not only extremely painful, but dries them up, and renders them brittle and consequently useless. *רָחַקָה*, Root *רָחַק*, Arab.

*רָחַקָה*, *fregit, percussit, calcavit ; to tread or break in pieces, prevail over, subdue*. The verbal suffix is to be taken collectively, and refers to *רָחַקָה*, as its antecedent. The metaphor of the net is borrowed from the custom of catching wild beasts with nets, which are so spread as effectually to entangle them, and thus secure their capture.—The next metaphor is taken from agricultural life. As the hand of the ploughman firmly binds the yoke on the neck of the ox, so inseparably had the punishment of the iniquities of Jerusalem been connected with her rebellious conduct towards Jehovah. *רָחַקָה*, *to be bound*, though occurring only this once in the Heb. Bible, is alone suitable to the connexion. *רָחַקָה*, *to be watched*,

which is found in the Keri and in several MSS. and printed editions, and is supported by the renderings of the LXX. and Syr., is inappropriate.—To express more forcibly the complicated character of the iniquities of the Jews as entailing punishment upon them, they are said to *entwine or interweave themselves*—the idea being probably borrowed from the inter-twining of withes for the purpose of binding the yoke with them.—Although *רָחַקָה*, or, as many MSS. read, *רָחַקָה*, is more immediately connected with *רָחַקָה*, it is also to be regarded as the nominative to *רָחַקָה*. I have construed accordingly.—After *רָחַקָה* subaud. *רָחַקָה*.—*רָחַקָה*, ver. 15, I consider as having the signification

of the Syr. *ܪܚܩܐ*, *rejecit, respuit, sprexit*.

Comp. *רָחַקָה*, Ps. cxix. 118. By *רָחַקָה*, *assembly*, are meant the collected forces of the Chaldeans. The term is borrowed from its use, as expressing the vast multitude who assembled at the solemn festivals.

16. That the very plaintive language here employed is that of Jerusalem, and not the personal lamentation of Jeremiah,

Because far from me is the comforter, the restorer of my life :  
My children are desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed.

ד 17 Zion spreadeth out her hands, she hath no comforter ;

Jehovah hath given charge to the enemies of Jacob around him :

Jerusalem hath become unclean among them.

י 18 Jehovah is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment :

Hear, I beseech you, all ye peoples, and behold my sorrow ;

My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

פ 19 I called to my lovers, they deceived me :

My priests and my elders expired in the city,

While they sought for themselves food that they might restore their life.

ק 20 Behold, O Jehovah ! for I am distressed, my bowels are made to boil ;

My heart is turned within me, for I have greatly rebelled :

Without the sword bereaveth, in the house it is as death.

ש 21 They have heard that I sigh, that I have no comforter ;

All mine enemies have heard of my calamity, they rejoice that thou hast inflicted it ;

Bring the day which thou hast announced, that they may be like me.

ת 22 Let all their wickedness come before thee ;

is evident from the last clause of the verse. Although the second *וְיָ* is wanting in some of Kennicott and De Rossi's MSS. and in all the ancient versions, yet the repetition for the sake of emphasis is quite in the style of Jeremiah. Comp. *וְיָ וְיָ*, chap. iv. 19.

17. There is no authority for reversing the alphabetical order of *ו* and *ז*, and so changing the position of this and the preceding verse, as Green does here, and proposes should be done, Ps. xxxiv. 16, 17. See on Elegy ii. 16, 17. Spreading out the hands is a token of the greatest distress.

18. For *וְיָ* read, with the Keri, *וְיָ* in the Vocative.

19. Comp. ver. 2. *וְיָ*, occurring, as it here does, in immediate connexion with *וְיָ*, *priests*, is to be understood in

an official sense, and not as simply indicative of old age. Both, without respect to dignity of office, were under the necessity of going in quest of food.

20. The geminated form *וְיָ* is strongly expressive of that violently excited state of the intestines which is occasioned by excessive grief. The whole verse is the most affecting imaginable. The *Caph* in *וְיָ* is the *Caph veritatis*, expressing the reality of the thing.

21, 22. While acknowledging that God had inflicted the punishment upon Jerusalem on account of her sins, in the true spirit of the theocracy, Jeremiah imprecates a similar treatment of her enemies. Without their destruction as a people, it was impossible for that theocracy to be restored. The servant of God is to be regarded as here speaking in his pro-

And deal with them as thou hast dealt with me for all my rebellions :

For my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

phetical character. Comp. Elegy iii. 64— the destruction of the Chaldean empire, 66. The *וַיָּבֹא הַיּוֹם*, *day*, referred to ver. 21, and that of the neighbouring states by was that of the capture of Babylon, and which the Jews had been maltreated.

## ELEGY II.

In this Elegy the same subject is prosecuted which had been taken up in the preceding, but though the scene in general is identical, the character of the description varies, consisting for the most part of references to circumstances connected with the immediate taking of the city. The prophet seems as if he felt it impossible to turn away his eye from the sad catastrophe before him, while he sets forth in the most plaintive strains, the sad havoc to which Jerusalem had been subjected.

⌘ 1 How hath the Lord covered with darkness the daughter of Zion !

He hath cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel ;  
And hath not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger !

⌘ 2 The Lord hath destroyed and not pitied all the dwellings of Jacob ;

He hath thrown down in his wrath the fortresses of the daughter of Judah ;

He hath razed them to the ground, he hath profaned the kingdom and its princes.

⌘ 3 He hath cut down in his hot anger every horn of Israel ;  
He hath turned back his right hand before the enemy :

1. *יָפֶה*, *how*, with which the first Elegy commences, and which forms the title of the collection, is repeated here and Elegy iv. 1. Instead of *יָפֶה* as occurring here, vers. 5 and 7, and Elegy i. 14, several MSS. read *יָדָה*, but apparently by correction of the transcribers. *יָפֶה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם*, *the beauty of Israel*, is descriptive, not of the inhabitants of Jerusalem under the emblem of a beautiful female, but of the magnificent and splendid temple,

called by Jehovah *יְהוָה בֵּיתוֹ*, *my beautiful house*, Is. lx. 7. By the "*footstool*" of Jehovah, the ark of the covenant on which the glory, as the symbol of the Divine presence, rested, seems to be intended. See 1 Chron. xxviii. 2 ; Ps. xcix. 5.

3. A *horn*, projecting from the forehead, was used not only as an ornament, but also as a badge of power and authority. 1 Sam. ii. 10 ; Ps. cxxxii. 17. It

And hath burned in Jacob like a fire which devoureth round about.

7 4 He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he hath steadied his right hand like an adversary;

And hath slain all the delights of the eye in the tents of the daughter of Zion:

He hath poured out his fury like fire.

7 5 The Lord hath been like an enemy, he hath destroyed Israel; He hath destroyed all her palaces, he hath destroyed his fortresses:

He hath increased in the daughter of Judah sorrow and sadness.

7 6 He hath also broken down his inclosure like that of a garden; He hath destroyed his place of assembly:

Jehovah hath caused to be forgotten in Zion assembly and sabbath;

And rejected, in the indignation of his anger, king and priest.

7 7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary;

He hath delivered over into the hands of the foe the walls of her palaces;

They made a noise in the house of Jehovah as on the day of assembly.

may seem doubtful whose right hand is here intended, but it seems most natural to refer it to Israel.

4. The point of comparison here is obviously that of the care taken by the archer to obtain a steady aim. *לַחֲזֹק*, *to kill, slay*, is used metaphorically, as in Ps. lxxviii. 47, for *destroy*. There is, therefore, no necessity, with Lowth, (Prelim. Diss.) Blayney, and Green, to supply *בְּלִיָּיִךְ*, *every youth*, which, after all, would lamely fill up the supposed defect in the metre. *אֹהֶל*, *tent*, is to be taken collectively for the habitations of the Jews.

5. In *הַמִּשְׁכָּן הַזֶּה* is a beautiful paronomasia, which, like *שֹׁמֵר יְהוָה*, Job xxx. 3, is intended to heighten the effect.

6. *שָׁן*, the same as *שָׁן*, *an enclosed place*, from *שָׁן*, *to interweave*, as the boughs of trees, and so make a hedge, *to*

*enclose*. Hence the noun comes to signify what is enclosed, as a hut, booth, tabernacle. It is here specially applied to the temple. *שָׁן* is found as the reading in a considerable number of MSS. *שָׁן* is first used for the place of assembly in this verse, and then for the solemn assembly which used to be congregated there.

7. Though it may at first sight appear incongruous to compare the noise made by warriors in storming a city to that of an assembly engaged in the celebration of worship; yet, however loud the sound of the temple-worship may have been when instruments and human voices were conjoined, it is not strictly with the noise thus produced, that the comparison is made, but with that of the multitudes who crowded the city on festival occasions. Green strangely transfers the

- 8 Jehovah hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion ;  
 He hath stretched the line, he hath not turned back his hand from destroying ;  
 The breastwork and the wall he hath made to mourn, they lament together.
- 9 Her gates are sunk into the earth, he hath destroyed and broken in pieces her barriers ;  
 Her king and her princes are among the heathen ;  
 There is no law ; her prophets find no vision from Jehovah.
- 10 They sit on the earth, they are silent, the elders of the daughter of Zion ;  
 They throw up dust over their heads, they gird themselves with sackcloth ;  
 The virgins of Jerusalem bow down their heads to the earth.
- 11 Mine eyes are consumed with tears, my bowels are troubled ;  
 My liver is poured out on the earth because of the breach of the daughter of my people :  
 Through the swooning of the infant and the suckling in the streets of the city.
- 12 They say to their mothers : Where is the corn and the wine ?  
 While they swoon like a wounded man in the streets of the city ;  
 While their life is poured out into the bosom of their mothers.

scene to the temple-worship of Bel or Nebo.—Whatever relation there may be in point of signification between *כִּי* and *וְיָ*, we are not warranted, with Blayney, to adopt the latter as the true reading.

8. The ancients used the measuring line, not only in the erection, but also in the demolition of buildings. Comp. 2 Kings xxi. 13; Is. xxxiv. 11. The metaphor is here employed to denote the rigidity with which the punishment was inflicted.

9. The sinking of the gates is to be referred to their being thrown down and covered with earth and rubbish from the walls. Some are of opinion that by the laconic *אין חוק*, *there is no law*, we are to understand Jeremiah as meaning to say, that all the calamity had come upon Jerusalem because her inhabitants had

not observed the fundamental principles of the theocracy ; but it is more in keeping with the spirit of the passage to consider him as referring to the legal observances which had all been swept away by the destruction of the Jewish state. Comp. Ps. lxxiv. 9.

10. A most graphic description of the posture and signs of mourning. Comp. Job ii. 12, 13.

11, 12. The scene here depicted is presented in the most touching colours. *כִּבְדִּי*, *the liver*, put for *מִכְבְּדִי*, used in a similar phrase, Job xvi. 13, denoting *the bile*, which is formed in a peculiar bladder on the inferior surface of the liver, and is copiously discharged when the passions are violently agitated. The language is physiologically correct, as we find it in other passages in Jeremiah. See on chap.

- 13 What shall I take to witness? or with what shall I compare thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?  
 To what shall I liken thee that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion?  
 For great as the sea is thy breach: who can heal thee?  
 14 Thy prophets see for thee vanity and stuff:  
 And reveal not thine iniquity, to reverse thy captivity;  
 They see for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.  
 15 All who pass along the road clap their hands at thee,  
 They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem:  
 Is this the city which men called the perfection of beauty,  
 a joy to the whole earth?  
 16 All thine enemies gape at thee with their mouth,  
 They hiss and gnash the teeth, they say: We have destroyed her;  
 Surely this is the day which we expected, we have found, we have seen it.  
 17 Jehovah hath done that which he had purposed, he hath fulfilled his threatening,

iv. 19.—A more pitiable spectacle cannot be witnessed than that of a starving child swooning with hunger, and turning to the breast of its mother, but finding no supply of milk. For the famine during the siege, see Jer. lii. 6.

13. The verb *יָדַע* occurs nowhere else in Kal, in the sense of testifying. Hence the Keri substitutes *יָדַע* in Hiphil, and with this a great number of MSS. and several printed editions agree. Jeremiah feels as if he had exhausted his powers of description. He cannot find any object to put in parallel with the lamentable condition of Jerusalem. The only exception is *the sea*, which, on account of its vast dimensions, alone furnished a fit emblem of the magnitude of the devastation effected by the Chaldeans. Upwards of seventy MSS. and five of the early editions read *יָדַע*, instead of *יָדַע*, and this reading is supported by the LXX., Syr., Vulg., Arab., and Targ.

14. I have employed our familiar term *stuff*, denoting contempt or dislike, as the most proper by which to express idiomatically the meaning of *קִשְׁיוֹת*, any-

thing *disagreeable, foolish, insipid*. Comp. the Arab. *تفل*, *froth, vomit*.—*קִשְׁיוֹת*,

LXX. *ἐξώσματα*, *expulsions*, or, as the common version, *causes of banishment*. Root, *קָרַח*, *to thrust, or drive out*. *קִשְׁיוֹת*, *burdens*, strictly mean *heavy or severe punishments*, but here, the causes of such punishments. The false prophets, in their attempts to account for the captivity, invented any cause but the true one, the apostasy of the Jews.

15. The language of this verse is that of insult and astonishment. For *יָדַע*, *the perfection of beauty*, comp. *יָדַע*, Ps. i. 2; and for *קִשְׁיוֹת*, *a joy to the whole earth*, see Ps. xlviii. 3.

16, 17. That the order of these verses has been inverted is undeniable, that beginning with *ב* being placed before that commencing with *ו*, contrary to the order of the Hebrew Alphabet. Blayney justly scouts the conjecture of Grotius, that the order of the Chaldean alphabet may have differed from that of the Hebrews, and that Jeremiah, now living under a new government, adopted the

Which he commanded from the days of old ; he hath razed  
and not pitied :

He hath made thine enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath  
elevated the horn of thine adversaries.

י 18 Their heart cried out to the Lord :

O wall of the daughter of Zion ! make tears to flow down like  
a torrent day and night ;

Give thyself no rest ; let not the pupil of thine eye cease.

ך 19 Arise ! cry loud in the night at the first of the watches ;

Pour out thy heart like water before the Lord :

Lift up thy hands to him for the life of thine infants,

Who swoon with famine at the top of all the streets.

ך 20 Look ! O Jehovah ! and consider whom thou hast treated  
thus :

arrangement of the letters in their alphabet. In the LXX. the notations 'ΑΩ and ΦΩ are given in the proper order, though the verses are translated as they now stand. Four of Kennicott's MSS. and one of De Rossi's exhibit the verses in the regular alphabetical order, as does also the Syriac version. The relation, however, of ver. 16, to that which precedes it, furnishing a continuation of the insulting language there employed, and the contrast so strikingly introduced in ver. 17, may be urged in favour of the hypothesis, that the inverted order as to alphabetical arrangement may be referred to Jeremiah himself, whose mind, when he composed the verses, was more intent on the matter than the mode in which it was arranged. See for similar transpositions of these very letters, and consequently of the verses commencing with them, Elegies iii. 46—51 ; iv. 16, 17 ;—a fact which is the more remarkable, since it is precisely in regard to these two letters, and not any others in the alphabetical series, that in all the three instances the alteration has taken place.—However the enemies of the Jews might tauntingly exult in their destruction of the Jewish metropolis, that disastrous event was ultimately to be referred to the purpose of Jehovah to punish its inhabitants for their sins. For שָׁמַיִם, ver. 16, nineteen MSS. and one of the earliest printed editions read in full

שָׁמַיִם. אֲנִי, an anomalous punctuation for the usual אֲנִי.

18. The nominative to the suffix in אֲנִי, are the inhabitants of Jerusalem understood. In this and the following verse, וְהָיָה, *the wall* of Jerusalem, is addressed synecdochically as a mother who has lost her children.

19. Instead of אֲנִי, forty of Kennicott's, and forty-eight of De Rossi's MSS., together with seven more of his originally, and the Hagiographa printed at Naples, read יָהּ. The Venetian Greek version has τοῦ ὀντατοῦ. On these authorities, I have not scrupled to follow this reading in the translation. The Hebrews at first divided the night into three watches : the first, commencing at sunset, and extending to what corresponded to our ten o'clock ; the second from ten till two in the morning ; and the third from that time till sun-rise. They afterwards adopted the Roman division of the night into four watches, which is the calculation found in the New Testament. A very considerable number of MSS. have בָּלַיָה in the text, agreeably to the Keri, and the textual punctuation of the printed editions. For the addition of a fourth line in this verse, see on Elegy i. 7.

20. אֵי is twice used in this verse with the force of a demonstrative interjection. The masculine suffix in אֵי is adopted instead of the feminine, to agree in form

Behold ! women eat their fruit, infants of a span long ;  
Behold ! priest and prophet are slain in the sanctuary of the  
Lord.

ו 21 Boys and old men lie on the ground in the streets,  
My maidens and my young men fall by the sword :  
Thou hast killed in the day of thy wrath, thou hast slaughtered,  
and not spared.

ת 22 Thou hast summoned, as on a festival day, my terrors around ;  
And there was not that escaped or remained in the day of the  
anger of Jehovah :

Those whom I had nursed and brought up, the enemy hath  
consumed.

with נָשִׁים preceding. For the horrible act here referred to, comp. Lev. xxvi. 29 ; Deut. xxviii. 56, 57, and the prediction, Jer. xix. 9. No MS. supplies רֶחֶם, *womb*, after פֶּרִי, *fruit*. The scene, though past, is vividly depicted by Jeremiah, as if it were still present to his view. The nominative to יָרֵד is בָּנֵי and נָשִׁים, taken singly.

21. Sixty-nine MSS., originally fifteen more, and eight printed editions, sup-

ported by the Targ., Syr., Vulg., and Arab., supply י before אֵל in the phrase לֹא תִכְלֶה.

22. The meaning is not that the Jews were surrounded by terrors on their festival days ; but that the call for the terrors in which they were involved at the capture of Jerusalem, was as loud as that which used to be given by the blowing of trumpets to summon the people to the feasts.

### ELEGY III.

The subject of this Elegy is the personal experience of Jeremiah, on which he expatiates in the most touching strains, in order partly to give vent to his own feelings, and partly to excite corresponding emotions in the breasts of his exiled countrymen. From the lively recollection which he had of the severe trials that he had endured in the course of his prophetic ministry, the merciful interpositions of the Lord on his behalf, and the indisputable right of the Most High to inflict suffering on sinful men, he proposes himself as an example from which they might derive instruction, and be induced, in the exercise of repentance and prayer, to hope for a restoration from their captivity. Towards the close this object comes out in the change of person from the singular to the plural.

The formal arrangement of the verses differs from that of the two preceding elegies, inasmuch as they here consist of three lines, each of which begins with the same letter of the Alphabet in regular order, whereas in the others the alphabetical arrangement is confined to the first letter of each verse.



## 1—3.

- ⌘ I AM the man that hath seen affliction, through the rod of his indignation.  
 ⌘ He hath led me away, and made me go into darkness, where there was no light.  
 ⌘ Surely he hath turned back his hand upon me all the day.

## 4—6.

- ⌘ He hath consumed my flesh and my skin, he hath broken in pieces my bones.  
 ⌘ He hath builded against me and struck me on the head, and it is distressed.  
 ⌘ He hath made me sit in dark places as those that have long been dead.

## 7—9.

- ⌘ He hath enclosed me around, so that I cannot go out : he hath made my chain heavy.  
 ⌘ Even when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.  
 ⌘ He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stones, he hath made my paths crooked.

1. Before *אֲנִי* supply *אֶפְשָׁר*. The antecedent to the suffix in *אֶפְשָׁר* is *Jehovah*, understood, not expressed. *אֶפְשָׁר*, *to see*, is frequently in Hebrew equivalent to *feeling*, or experiencing in any way. Hence the phrase : *to see death*, i.e. *to die*.—Jeremiah had experienced peculiar afflictions. Besides being visited with them in his own person, he was painfully called to witness their endurance by his fellow-countrymen.

2. Though there may be, in the mention here made of darkness and the absence of light, an allusion to his circumstances when shut up in the dungeon, yet the language is metaphorically descriptive of his afflictions in general. This metaphor, which is exceedingly expressive, is very common in Scripture.

3. The phrase *to turn back the hand*, here denotes to give repeated strokes, to afflict continuously, as it follows in the verse. Thus Itosenmüller : *iterum iterumque*.

4—6. The cast of the language in these verses is borrowed from the effect of affliction on the human frame. *אֶפְשָׁר*,

*to build*, is used in a military sense for the making of hostile preparations, such as raising mounds, from which to shoot at, and otherwise attack a city. *אֶפְשָׁר* is properly rendered *κεφαλῇ* by the LXX., and similarly the Targ. and Arab. The word is here an accusative absolute, *אֶפְשָׁר*, *me*, being understood. *אֶפְשָׁר*, lit. *and there is distress* : viz. in the head just mentioned.

6. *אֶפְשָׁר*, *dark places*, such as mausolea, or sepulchres in which the bodies of the dead are deposited, as it follows in the verse. Whether there be here an allusion to an ancient custom of placing the dead bodies in a sitting posture in the sepulchres is doubtful, though the language would rather seem to imply it. Jeremiah represents himself as having more the appearance of a skeleton, or a mummy, than that of a living body.

7—9. The prophet now places himself in the position of a prisoner, who is securely immured, and to whose supplications for deliverance, how earnestly soever they may be made, no attention is paid.

10—12.

- 7 He hath been to me a lurking bear, a lion in secret places.  
 7 He hath turned my ways aside, and torn me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.  
 7 He hath bent his bow, and taken a steady aim at me, as a mark for the arrow.

13—15.

- 7 He hath caused to enter into my reins the sons of his quiver.  
 7 I was a laughing-stock to all my people: their song all the day.  
 7 He hath filled me with bitter things, he hath made me drunk with wormwood.

16—18.

- 7 He hath made my teeth cranch grit, he hath covered me with ashes.  
 7 Thou hast thrust me away from prosperity, I forgot happiness.  
 7 And I said: my confidence is perished, and my hope from Jehovah.

19—21.

- 7 Remember my affliction and my persecution, the wormwood and the gall.

10, 11. He next conceives of himself as a traveller whose way is blocked up by a solid wall, and who, being compelled to turn aside into the devious pathways of the forest, is exposed to the rapacity of wild beasts.

12, 13. The idea of a hunter was naturally suggested by the circumstances just referred to. This is beautifully expressed in language borrowed from such employment. By a common Hebraism, arrows are called sons of the quiver.

14, 15. Instead of *my people*, a considerable number of MSS. read *foreigners*, and four *in the plural*; but this reading, though supported by the Syr., seems less suitable than the former. There is no evidence that the prophet was treated otherwise than with respect by foreigners. Instead of meeting with any commiseration from his countrymen, fidelity in the discharge of his duty to whom had been the occasion of all his personal troubles, he was made the butt of their ridicule, and the theme of their satirical songs. How much this must have embittered

his condition it is easy to imagine. Comp. Job xxx. 9. To express the excessive acerbity of his feelings, he employs the plural, *יָחִירִים*, *bitternesses*.

16. It is probable that reference is here made to the grit that often mixes with bread baked in ashes, which is common in the East. From the covering of the bread with the ashes Jeremiah borrows the idea, and represents himself as thus covered. Such was the humiliating condition to which he had been reduced. *כָּסָה*, the verb here used for *covering*, is a *ἀπαξ λέγ*, but the signification is sufficiently established by the cognate Arab.

*كس* *to throw down, overwhelm, cover a well, by filling it up with earth.* LXX. *ἐψώμισε*.

17, 18. Not only had all present enjoyment been annihilated, but all prospect of future prosperity had been cut off. The circumstances of the prophet had been most pitiable.

19—24. Notwithstanding temptations to despondency, and the bitter complaints

- † Do but remember, for my soul is bowed down within me.  
 † This I lay to heart, therefore I hope.

22—24.

- ¶ It is of the loving kindnesses of Jehovah that we are not consumed, because his mercies fail not.  
 ¶ They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness.  
 ¶ Jehovah is my portion, saith my soul, therefore do I hope in him.

25—27.

- ☩ Good is Jehovah to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.  
 ☩ Good is it both to hope and to wait in silence for the salvation of Jehovah.  
 ☩ Good is it for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth.

28—30

- י He sitteth alone and is silent because He hath laid it upon him.  
 י He putteth his mouth in the dust, perhaps there may be hope.  
 י He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him, he is filled with reproach.

31—33.

- ☩ For the Lord will not east off for ever.  
 ☩ For though he grieve, he will yet have compassion according to the greatness of his mercies.  
 ☩ For he afflicteth not willingly, nor grieveth the children of men.

to which he had given utterance, the prophet does not let go his hold on the God of his life; but is convinced that, if He only will regard him, all will be well. The form *יָדָהּ*, ver. 20. being emphatic, I have endeavoured to give the force of it by the rendering: *Do but remember*. The *א* prefixed, to mark the finite form of the verb, is that of the Second Masculine, and not that of the Third Feminine. For *יָדָהּ*, read with the *Keri* *יָדָהּ*.—*וְזֶה* This, the demonstrative pronoun anticipative, is designed to attract attention specially to what follows. viz. the view of the Divine character, verses 22, 23. Upon this, as upon an immovable foundation, the hopes of Jeremiah rested.

25—27. The repetition of *יָדָהּ* at the beginning of these three lines, just as *יָדָהּ*, verses 31—33, has a fine effect. *יָדָהּ*, according to the punctuation, should be *יָדָהּ*. Before *יָדָהּ*, supply *יָדָהּ*. For *יָדָהּ*, in his youth, ten MSS., originally nine more, and now two, read *יָדָהּ*, from his youth. Thus the Aldine text of the LXX., and Theodotion. It is thought by some that Jeremiah has here special reference to his own youth, chap. i. 6, 7. Scarcely had he entered on his prophetic work, than he became the object of persecution from his base and ungrateful countrymen.

28—33. Having asserted ver. 27, that it is beneficial to be early visited with affliction, Jeremiah proceeds in these

## 34—36.

- ↳ To tread under one's feet all the prisoners of the land ;
- ↳ To turn aside a man's cause ;
- ↳ To wrong a man in his suit ; the Lord approveth not.

## 37—39.

- ↳ Who is this that ordereth and it taketh place, when the Lord commandeth it not ?
- ↳ Out of the mouth of the Most High proceed not evil and good ?
- ↳ Why should a living man murmur ? a man for the punishment of his sins ?

## 40—42.

- ↳ Let us search and try our ways, and return to Jehovah.
- ↳ Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the heavens.
- ↳ We have sinned and rebelled : thou hast not pardoned.

verses to describe the position of the afflicted saint, who in the midst of his severest trials recognises the hand of God, and in patience possesses his soul, assured that in due time deliverance will arrive ; that no adversity is inflicted arbitrarily, but that what men suffer is less than their iniquities deserve.

34—36. This triplet is marked by each line beginning with an Infinitive—the Nominative to the verbs being reserved till the close of the last. Whether the words are to be considered as a general statement, or, whether there be a specific reference to the injustice and cruelty with which the Jews were treated by their conquerors, or with which they treated each other, it is difficult to determine. *לִּי, to me*, ver. 36, is used in the sense of regarding with approbation. This acceptance of the verb, however much Rosenmüller may doubt it, is clearly established by such passages as Ps. lvi. 18 ; Hab. i. 13. The meaning is, according to a common Hebraism, that God disapproves of such acts of cruelty as are here specified, and by implication, that he will punish those who are guilty of them.

37. What the prophet here interrogatively teaches, is that nothing transpires without the Divine appointment.

39. Adversity and prosperity are not indiscriminately administered : all the circumstances of mankind are arranged

according to infinite wisdom. *לִּי, evils*, i. e. calamities, adversities.

39. *לִּי*, or, as a considerable number of MSS. and some printed editions read, according to the Keri, in the plural, signifies here *punishment*, or sufferings inflicted on account of sin. Some interpreters would set aside the force of *לִּי, living*, but without any just reason. The implied meaning is, that if sin were punished according to its full demerit, life itself would be no longer continued to the transgressor. While, therefore, he continues to enjoy this inestimable blessing, and thus has time afforded him for repentance, it is highly unbecoming in him to indulge in murmuring at the Divine conduct in afflicting him.

40. From the assumption of the plural in this and the immediately following verses, it is obvious that, in those which just precede, Jeremiah has in view the punishment to which the Jews, as a people, were subjected. He now exhorts to repentance and ingenuous confession of sin.

41. In *לִּי, together*, the preposition has here the rare signification of *with, together with, in addition to*. The action of confession was not to be the mere outward extension of the hands towards God. Such outward expression, to be sincere, was to be accompanied with the inward feelings of the heart.

42. The confession is supposed to

43—45.

- D Thou hast shut us up in anger and pursued us : thou hast slain, and not pitied :  
 D Thou hast shut thyself up in a cloud, so that prayers cannot pass through.  
 D Thou hast made us an offscouring and a refuse in the midst of the peoples.

46—48.

- D All our enemies gape at us with their mouths ;  
 D Fear and terror have fallen upon us, desolation and destruction.  
 D Mine eye floweth down in streams of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49—51.

- Y Mine eye poureth down and ceaseth not, because there are no intermissions,  
 Y While Jehovah looketh down and beholdeth from heaven.  
 Y Mine eye affecteth my soul, because of all the daughters of my city.

52—54.

- Y They have chased me closely as a bird, who were my enemies without cause.  
 Y They have made my life silent in the dungeon ; they have thrown a stone over me :  
 Y Waters flowed over my head ; I said, I am cut off.

he made while the exile still continued. There is implied a fervent hope, that now it was made, the captivity would be reversed.

43—51. Now follows an elaborate description of the disastrous outcast condition of the Jewish people. After *וְיָהוָה*, at the beginning of ver. 43, *וְיָהוָה*, *us*, is understood. Instead of *לִשְׁמֵי שָׁמַיִם*, upwards of eighty MSS., twelve printed editions, the Alex. copy of the LXX., the Arab., Syr., Vulg., and Targ. read *לְמַעַן*.

46—51. A similar inversion of the letters *ו* and *ב* has taken place here as at Elegy ii. 16, 17, and iv. 16, 17. The true alphabetical order is rectified in one of Kennicott's, and five of De Rossi's MSS., and in the Syr. The present arrangement, however, better suits the connexion, and was most probably that of the prophet. See on Elegy ii. 16, 17.

47. Eleven of De Rossi's MSS. read

*וְיָהוָה*, removal, from *וָיָהוָה*, to lift up, take or carry away, and two more have read so originally ; but this reading, though also found in upwards of twenty printed editions, and supported by the LXX. and Vulg., is inferior to *וְיָהוָה*, desolation, from *וָיָהוָה*, to lay waste, which is that of the Textus Receptus.

50. *וְ* is here to be rendered *while*. The prophet regarded it as a great aggravation of the calamity, that the Lord should see it all, and yet not interpose for its removal.

52—54. The prophet, having in the preceding triplet given vent to his feelings in behalf of his exiled countrymen, now reverts to his own personal afflictions. In verses 53, 54, it has been thought that he describes his situation in the dungeon, of which we have an account in chap. xxxviii. 6—12 ; but as it is expressly stated in that narrative

55—57.

- פ I invoked thy name, O Jehovah! from the deepest dungeon.  
 פ Thou heardest my voice; cover not thine ear at my breathing,  
 at my cry:  
 פ Thou drewest near in the day when I invoked thee; thou  
 saidst, Fear not.

58—60.

- 7 Thou, O Lord! hast pleaded the causes of my soul, thou hast  
 redeemed my life;  
 7 O Jehovah! thou hast seen my wrong, judge thou my cause:  
 7 Thou hast seen all their vengeance, all their devices against me.

61—63.

- 7 O Jehovah! Thou hast heard their reproach, all their devices  
 against me;  
 7 The speeches of those who rose up against me, and their  
 machinations all the day;  
 7 Thou hast seen their sitting down and their rising up, I am  
 their song.

64—66.

- 7 Render them a retribution, O Jehovah! according to the  
 work of their hands.  
 7 Give them hardness of heart, thy curse to them;  
 7 Pursue and destroy them in anger, from under the heavens of  
 Jehovah.

that there was no water in the dungeon, it is more probable that the description in the Elegy is merely a poetical aggravation of the sufferings which Jeremiah endured, and is not to be understood literally. The flowing of waters over the head is an image of imminent danger. See Ps. lxxix. 1, 2. At the same time, there can be no doubt that the placing of a stone over the mouth of the dungeon refers to the custom of enclosing prisoners by this means for the sake of greater security. For 3 in the sense of *over*, in the phrase 7 777, see Gesenius in voc., A. 4.

56. 7777 777, the Future used for the Imperative. Before 77777, the preposition has the signification of *with a view to*; before 77777 it takes its temporal signification, *at, at the time of*.

57—62. The prophet records the gracious answers which he had received

to his prayers to encourage others to apply, as he had done, to Jehovah for relief.

60. For 7 twenty-three MSS., originally thirteen more, now two, the LXX, Targ., Syr., Vulg., and Venet. Greek, read 777, as in ver. 61; where, on the other hand, seventeen MSS. read 7 for 777.

61. 77777, *their reproach*, i.e. the opprobrious language with which they insult me.

62. 77777, *lips*, for what they utter; *talk, speeches*. The false prophets and their adherents among the people were continually traducing Jeremiah in their conversation.

65. 77777, lit. *a covering of heart*, i.e. mental disease, obstinacy, hardness, the worst calamity that can befall a human being. For the imprecations of Jeremiah, see on Elegy i. 21, 22.

## ELEGY IV.

This Elegy, like the first, treats of the disastrous circumstances connected with the capture of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the Jewish polity, the removal of the people into exile, the hope of restoration, and the certainty of retribution on the Idumæans, who to all their former injuries, had added that of attacking, as auxiliaries of the Chaldeans, the chosen people.

- ⌘ 1 How the gold hath become dim! the fine gold changed!  
The sacred stones are thrown down at the top of every street!
- ⌘ 2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold;  
How they are regarded as earthen pitchers, the work of the potter's hands!
- ⌘ 3 Even the jackals draw out the breast, they suckle their whelps:  
The daughter of my people is cruel, like the ostriches in the desert.
- ⌘ 4 The tongue of the suckling cleaveth to its palate with thirst.  
Infants ask bread, but no one breaketh it for them.

1. **זָהָב**, the Hophal of **סָפַף**, *to congregate*, Arab. **غَم**, *lexit, obstruxit*, as clouds, when collected, do the heavens; hence *to grove*, or *make dark, obscure* the lustre of any thing. LXX. *ἐμυρνώθη*. The gold, and the fine gold, are used metaphorically to denote the illustrious portion of the Jewish people, as the princes, councillors, priests, &c., as it follows in ver. 2.

For **אֲבִיבִים**, the Chaldee orthography, the more correct Hebrew **אֲבִיבִים** is found in many MSS. By **אֲבִיבִים**, *the sacred stones*, C. B. Michaëlis thinks are meant the precious gems in the breastplate of the high-priest; but though these may have suggested the idea, it seems more in keeping with the connexion to interpret the phrase of those persons who were consecrated to the service of the temple.

2. **אֲבִיבִים**, lit. *those who were weighed*. As what is weighed is estimated according to the contents of the opposite scale, the verb came to be employed in the sense of comparing one thing with another. Comp. Job. xxviii. 16, 19.

3. The prophet here contrasts the unnatural conduct of the Jewish people, in whose treatment of their children during the siege all tender feeling seemed to have been extirpated, with the instinct of jackals, which suckle their young; and compares them to the ostriches, which, after laying their eggs in the sand, speed their way into the desert, and never think more about them. Comp. Job. xxxix. 15. If the textual reading **כִּינִים** were genuine, it could only be pointed **כִּינִים**, which is not susceptible of any suitable interpretation; but the textual punctuation, and the division of the words adopted by the Keri, **כִּינִים**, *like the ostriches*, affords a meaning quite in accordance with the drift of the context. Thus forty-five of Kennicott's MSS., and seventy-seven of De Rossi's, and most of the early printed editions. **כִּינִין** is the Chaldee plural for **כִּינִי**. Sing. **כִּינִי** a wild beast, now generally allowed to be the *jackal*. LXX. *δράκοντες*. Some, confounding the word with **כִּינִין**, a *sea-monster*, the plural of which is **כִּינִיִּים**, interpret it of the whale. **כִּינִי** is commonly used of the whelp of the lion.

- 5 They who fed on dainties perish in the streets :  
 They who were brought up on scarlet embrace dunghills.  
 6 For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my  
 people is greater than that of the sin of Sodom :  
 That was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands attacked  
 her.  
 7 Her Nazarites were brighter than snow, they were whiter  
 than milk ;  
 They were more ruddy in body than corals, their shape was  
 the sapphire.  
 8 Their appearance is [now] darker than the dawn, they are  
 not recognised in the streets :  
 Their skin adheres to their bones, it is dried up like wood.  
 9 Happier were the slain with the sword than the slain with  
 famine :  
 Because these pined away, pierced through, without the fruits  
 of the field.  
 10 The hands of compassionate women boiled their children :  
 They became food for them in the destruction of the daughter  
 of my people.  
 11 Jehovah spent his fury, he poured out the heat of his anger ;  
 And kindled a fire in Zion, which devoured her foundations.

5.  $\text{בְּחֵלֶם}$  is used as the sign of the accusative, as in the Aramaic and Ethiopic languages. Instead of scarlet couches on which the grandees had been nursed, they were compelled to recline on dunghills.

6.  $\text{וְעַתָּה}$  and  $\text{וְעַתָּה}$  are here, as frequently, to be taken in the sense of punishment.  $\text{וְעַתָּה}$  means to *attack*; Arab.  $\text{حَل}$ , *irruit in aliquid*; to *afflict, wound* with the hand, and is here expressive of human intervention. No instrumentality of the kind was employed in the destruction of Sodom, but it was most barbarously used by the Chaldeans at the capture of Jerusalem.

7.  $\text{נָזִירִים}$ , lit. *separated ones*, those who, by special acts of self-denial or abstinence, consecrated themselves to the more immediate service of God. For the law regulating the conduct of the Nazarites, see Num. vi. From the special notice here taken of them, and the encomiums

passed upon their appearance, it may be inferred that they were held in high estimation.  $\text{עַצְמוֹתַי}$ , *bone*, and this for the body, or bodily form, of which the bones form so essential a part.  $\text{עַצְמוֹתַי}$  Bochart, after the Rabbins, renders *pearls*, but quite preposterously, as the colour specified at once shows. Michaelis, Gesenius, and others, *red corals*, from the root  $\text{פָּצַח}$ , to divide into branches. Hence the Arab.  $\text{فَنِ}$ , a branch.  $\text{עֲצָמָא}$ , lit. *cut*, i. e. shape or figure, from  $\text{עָצַב}$ , to cut. Syr.  $\text{ܥܬܥܬܐܬܐ}$  their body.

9.  $\text{פָּרְצָה}$ , *pierced through*, is very expressive of the sharp pain occasioned by severe hunger.

10. Comp. *Elegy* ii. 20; 2 Kings vi. 28, 29; Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 56, 57. For a most graphic description of such a horrible scene, see Josephus' account of the siege under Titus, Bell. Jud. cap. x. 9.



- ל<sup>12</sup> The kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the globe  
 would not have believed,  
 That the adversary and the foe could have entered the gates  
 of Jerusalem.  
 מ<sup>13</sup> Because of the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her  
 priests,  
 Who shed the blood of the righteous in her midst,  
 נ<sup>14</sup> They wandered blind in the streets, they were stained with  
 blood :  
 So that men could not touch their garments.  
 ד<sup>15</sup> Away, unclean ! they cried to them. Away ! away ! touch  
 not !  
 Surely they flee away, they wander ;  
 They say among the nations, they shall dwell no more.  
 ס<sup>16</sup> The face of Jehovah hath divided them, he will no more  
 regard them :  
 They respected not the persons of the priests, they showed  
 no favour to the elders.  
 פ<sup>17</sup> While we still existed, our eyes failed [looking] for our vain  
 help :  
 On our watch-towers we watched for a nation that could not  
 save us.

12. Such was the natural strength of Jerusalem, and such the wide-spread belief that the God of the Jews was omnipotent, that the city was considered to be impregnable.

15. The inhabitants were so stained with blood, that they were, as legally unclean, shunned by all, and earnestly summoned to remove. There is much force and beauty in the triple form סורו—סורו—סורו. Although נזר strictly signifies to *turn aside* from the way when travelling, and only stopping for the night, or *sojourning* for a short period anywhere, yet here, as Judg. v. 17 ; Ps. xv. 1 ; lxi. 5, and elsewhere, it is used in a more extended acceptation, as equivalent to נשב, *to dwell*, to have a permanent abode. The Jews were so completely driven away from their homes, that no prospect was afforded of their re-occupying them. They had turned a deaf ear to all the admonitions of the pro-

phets, and, with the warnings, had also rejected the promises of a restoration.

16. The same inversion of the order of the letters פ and ס has taken place here which has been noticed at Elegies ii. 16, 17 ; iii. 46—51. Vers. 16 and 17 follow in the regular order of the alphabet in four of Kennicott's MSS. and two of De Rossi's. In the LXX. there is the regular notation of the letters, but the verses are unaltered. פני יהוה, *the face of Jehovah*, i.e. his anger or displeasure, as Ps. xxxiv. 17 : the countenance being that part of the body in which angry feelings are manifested. The nominative to נקטו and קניי are the enemies, understood.

17. While the city was surrounded, but not yet taken by the Chaldean army, the inhabitants looked, but looked in vain, for assistance from Egypt. That power, in which they had always been so prone to trust, completely disappointed

י<sup>18</sup> They hunted our steps, so that we could not walk in our streets ;

Our end approached, our days were filled up; surely our end was come.

פ<sup>19</sup> Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of heaven ;

They chased us hotly on the mountains, they lay in wait for us in the desert.

ך<sup>20</sup> The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of Jehovah, was taken in their pits ;

Respecting whom we said: Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

ז<sup>21</sup> Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom ! thou inhabitress of the land of Uz !

To thee also shall the cup pass over, thou shalt be drunken and uncover thyself.

ח<sup>22</sup> The punishment of thine iniquity is completed, O daughter of Zion ! he will no more hold thee captive :

He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom ! he will carry thee away captive because of thy sins.

their hopes, as every refuge must all whose hearts are alienated from God. Comp. Jer. xxxvii. 5—11.

19. פ<sup>19</sup> properly signifies *to burn, be hot*, then as here, and Gen. xxxi. 36; Ps. x. 2, *to pursue hotly*.

20. That Zedekiah is the king here referred to, is now allowed by the most approved interpreters. For the historical fact, see 2 Kings xxv. 5, 6; Jer. lxi. 8, 9. We read of no such capture of Josiah, to whom some, from a misinterpretation of 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, have applied the present verse. Zedekiah might be said to be "the breath of their nostrils," in-

asmuch as their life was bound up with his. They entertained the hope, that if he were spared by Nebuchadnezzar, they might be kindly treated in Babylon for his sake. See Introd. p. 276. The application of the words to our Saviour is altogether arbitrary.

21. The Idumæans are ironically called to indulge in their wanton mirth. It would soon come to an end. Comp. Jer. xlix. 7—22.

22. ז<sup>22</sup> and ח<sup>22</sup> are prophetic futures. Punishment would assuredly overtake the Idumæans.

## ELEGY V.

This concluding Elegy may be regarded as an epiphonema containing a brief recapitulation of the grievous calamities which had been treated of in the preceding ones. The whole body of the Jewish people, now in exile, bewail the sad change which had taken place in their circumstances, acknowledge that their sins were the cause, and express their earnest desire that their covenant God would restore them to their former prosperity.

- 1 REMEMBER, O Jehovah ! what hath happened to us ;  
Regard and look on our reproach.
- 2 Our inheritance is transferred to foreigners ;  
Our houses to strangers.
- 3 We are orphans, and have no father ;  
Our mothers are as widows.
- 4 Our water we drink for money ;  
Our wood comes in for a price.
- 5 We are persecuted with a yoke on our necks ;  
We toil and have no rest.
- 6 We gave the hand to Egypt  
And to Assyria to be satisfied with bread.
- 7 Our fathers sinned, and are not ;  
And we bear the punishment of their iniquities.
- 8 Slaves domineer over us ;  
None delivereth out of their hand.
- 9 With our lives we bring in our bread,  
Because of the sword of the desert.
- 10 Our skins are black like an oven,  
Because of the hot blasts of famine.

1. *הַיָּדָיִם*, Keri *הַיָּדָיִם*, the full orthography. The *ה* thus added to the Imperative, expresses the emotion of ardent desire on the part of the speakers.

3. The Jews were reduced to the condition of orphans and widows, the most deplorable of any in which the members of the human family can be placed.

4. *הַמַּיִם*, *our water*, not merely what was necessary for their use, but what was contained in their own cisterns, consequently was their own property. This they were compelled to purchase from the enemy. It was the same with their forests.

5. Ninety MSS. and three of the early printed editions read *עַל צְוֵרֵינוּ* in the plural, instead of *עַל צְוֵרֵנוּ* in the singular. The words, *עַל צְוֵרֵנוּ נִדְרָשׁוּ*, lit. *upon our necks we are persecuted*, express elliptically the great hardship to which the Jews were reduced in being compelled as captives to bear a heavy yoke on their necks.

6. *נָתַתִּי*, *to give the hand*, means to give a pledge of fidelity, to submit, surrender. Before *אֲשִׁיר* and *מִקְרָם* is an

ellipsis of the preposition *לְ*. The Jews had been grievously oppressed by the Egyptians after the death of Josiah, and were now reduced to the last extremity by the Chaldeans, to whom the name of *אֲשִׁיר*, *Assyria*, is given, because they occupied the territory over which the Assyrian empire had formerly extended.

7. The Keri supplies the *ו* before *אֲנִי* and *אֲנִי*, and this in the textual reading of many MSS. and of some of the early printed editions. What the Jews here complain of, that they were made to suffer for the sins of their ancestors, was current as a proverb among them, for which they were specially reproved, Ezek. xviii.

9. In procuring the necessities of life from those parts of the country which lay at a distance from the metropolis, where the flocks and herds were feeding, they were exposed to attacks from the robber-Arabs in the desert. Seventy-three MSS. and two of the earliest editions read *עַל צְוֵרֵינוּ* in the plural.

10. Fifty-eight MSS. and the Son-

- 11 They ravished the matrons in Zion,  
Virgins in the cities of Judah.
- 12 Princes they hung up by the hand ;  
The persons of elders were not honoured.
- 13 Young men they took to grind at the mill,  
And boys fell with the wood.
- 14 Aged men have ceased from the gate,  
Young men from their song.
- 15 The joy of our heart hath ceased ;  
Our dance is turned into mourning,
- 16 The crown of our head hath fallen ;  
Alas ! now for us, because we have sinned.
- 17 Because of this our heart is faint,  
Because of these things our eyes are darkened.
- 18 Because of Mount Zion which is desolate ;  
Foxes traverse it.
- 19 Thou, O Jehovah ! sittest [as king] for ever,  
Thy throne is from generation to generation.

cin. Bible read עֲרִירִי in the plural, as in the preceding instance. Hunger occasions a violent irritation of the whole nervous system, and dries up the pores of the skin, so that at last it becomes as if it had been exposed to the influence of the burning heat of the simoom, to which it is probable Jeremiah refers when he uses the term גִּלְגִּילִי, *glowing, hot winds*. Gesenius compares the λῦδος αἶθρος of Hesiod, λῦδος αἶθρων of Callimachus, *igneæ fumes* of Quintilian, *gula flamma* of Ovid, and the Arab. نار الجوع, *fire of famine*. Comp. for the use of חֲרָבָה, Ps. xi. 6.

11. The usual practice of a brutal soldiery on the taking of a city.

12. As it does not appear that hanging by the hand was ever used as a mode of judicial punishment by the ancients, it must have been practised on the Jewish princes from mere wanton cruelty. In this verse the term זִקְנִים, *elders*, is used in an official sense, and not merely to describe age, as the word princes in the parallelism shows.

13. Grinding at the mill was the work of female slaves, or the lowest maid-servants. To put the young men to such

employment was regarded as the greatest degradation.—Mere boys were compelled to carry quantities of wood too heavy for them to bear without falling from its weight.

14, 15. A painful reflection on the sad reverse of circumstances which had taken place. גִּלְגִּילִי is not here descriptive of office, but of age, as the contrast in צִיּוּרִים, *young men*, shows. It is common in the East for aged men to meet in the open space without the gate of the city, to pass the time in narrating or hearing the news of the day, or the stories of bygone years. From this an easy transition is made to the jocund pastime of the young.

16. כִּתְרוֹתָהּ, *the crown*, the insignia of honour. The removal of this and the consequent disgrace with which the Jews were overwhelmed, they trace to the true cause, their sin, which they ingenuously confess before God.

18. Foxes, which are numerous in Palestine, had taken possession of the desolations of Zion. They were probably first attracted thither by the bodies of the slain, of which they are particularly fond.

19—22. On the assurance of the

- 20 Why shouldest thou forget us for ever ?  
 Why abandon us for a length of days ?
- 21 Turn us back, O Jehovah ! to thyself, and we shall return ;  
 Renew our days as in the olden time.
- 22 For surely thou hast utterly rejected us,  
 Thou hast been exceedingly wroth with us.

perpetuity of the Divine government of human affairs, is founded the hope that, however desperate the circumstances of the Jews might be, their restoration was possible. They therefore make it the subject of earnest prayer. The melancholy consequences of their repudiation they urge as a reason why God should grant them the renewed experience of his favour.

Rosenmüller observes that in the He-

brew MSS. ver. 21 is repeated after ver. 22, the Jews labouring under the superstition, that when a book concludes with a tristful and threatening sentence, the penultimate verse is to be repeated, to put to flight the bad omen. The same repetition is found in most of the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible at the end of the Books of Isaiah, Malachi, and Ecclesiastes.

THE END.

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